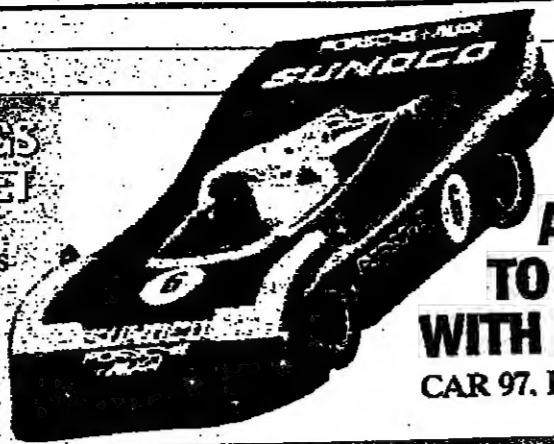


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CAR 97, PAGE 5

PLUS INSIDE: WEEKEND, 1015 FOR YOUNG TIMES READERS AND DIRECTORY

Rank-and-file support for Hague

Local Tories demand vote on leadership

By ANDREW PIERCE, JAMES LANDALE AND STEPHEN FARRELL

A GROWING rebellion by local Conservative associations over the conduct of the party's leadership contest is threatening to undermine the outcome, which will be decided by 164 MPs in a secret ballot.

A Times survey of 80 constituency associations has found almost unanimous support for an urgent overhaul of the rules to give them a direct say in the choice of leader.

William Hague, 36, the youngest contender, has emerged as the overwhelming favourite among the rank-and-file to succeed John Major. The former Welsh Secretary secured the support of more than half the association chairmen who were willing to name their preferred choice.

Kenneth Clarke, the former Chancellor, and Michael Howard, the former Home Secretary, received no backing. Support for John Redwood, Peter Lilley, and Stephen Dorrell was evenly matched.

The deepening anger among activists over their exclusion from the leadership process has caused concern at Conservative Central Office. Senior party officials already agreed that the absence in the ballot of any Tory MPs from Wales or Scotland, and only one from Birmingham, would be exploited by Labour. "They will paint us as an English regional party," said one official last night.

The dispute was fuelled yesterday by the intervention of Robin Hodgson, the chairman of the National Union, which is responsible for the voluntary wing of the party and is based at Central Office. He told Radio 4's *The World*



Lord Blake: "Reform is long overdue"

survive. That is why we want our own say," said one chairman last night.

Sir Norman Fowler, the former Tory party chairman, and Lord Archer of Weston-super-Mare, a former deputy chairman, have backed the rebellion.

Lord Blake, the Tory party historian and constitutionalist, also urged the party to change or run the risk of alienating its supporters.

"The time for reform is long overdue," he said. "The National Union was set up in the days of Disraeli. While the members are consulted, they have never had a direct say in the selection of their leader."

Sir Edward Heath was the first leader to be chosen by a ballot of MPs in 1965. His election replaced the system in which the party leader was chosen by party grandees.

Lord Blake said: "Times have changed and the Conservative Party must change with them. The absence of MPs in large parts of the United Kingdom has made the need for a review all the more urgent."

The Labour Party has modernised. It is time for the Conservatives to follow suit. I suspect it is too late for the next contest. But it should be the last one where MPs and MPs alone, choose the leader of the Conservative Party."

Tony Blair, the sole surviving Tory MP in Birmingham, said the local constituency associations could inspire the Tory fightback. However, the absence of any Tory MPs in major cities such as Liverpool, Coventry, Manchester, and

Continued on page 2, col 5

Appeal by Redwood, page 2
Leading article, page 23

Question time cut attacked

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

TONY BLAIR was last night accused by Conservatives of rushing through arbitrary parliamentary reforms after he abolished the twice-weekly Commons spectacle of Prime Minister's question time.

The Prime Minister abandoned the system, introduced in 1961, of two 15-minute sessions a week, replacing them with a single half-hour slot each Wednesday.

Mr Blair and John Major have both been dismayed at the poor quality of question

time. The cheering and jeering during question time increased during the last Parliament and both main party leaders have appealed to backbenchers to show restraint.

However, the sessions in the final days of the last Parliament provoked the most bitter exchanges between Mr Major and Mr Blair and prompted MPs to dismiss the sessions as a waste of time.

The changes, which begin on May 21, will be followed by a detailed study of Commons procedures by a select committee set up to investigate further reforms to question time and Prime Minister's questions.

The announcement is the first of a raft of Commons reforms that Labour plans to introduce. Among proposals to be examined are plans for a "constituency week" in which MPs can arrange meetings with constituents, a shorter summer recess, more opportunities for MPs to question ministers during recess, and an end to legislation running out of Commons time at the end of a parliamentary session.

The speed with which Mr Blair introduced the changes, and his decision not to consult MPs before announcing the reforms, drew strong criticism

from senior Tories who accused him of abusing his power by not asking for the approval of the Commons.

A Downing Street spokesman denied that the failure to consult MPs amounted to a breach of Commons convention. "The Prime Minister's question time is very much a matter for the Prime Minister. MPs can make their views known to the special committee."

Mr Major voiced concern over the "arbitrary" nature of the changes. William Hague, one of the Tory leadership candidates, said: "It's plain that Mr Blair is going to try to bulldoze through his policies without giving MPs the chance to put him to test."

The promise of further reforms to Prime Minister's questions also prompted fears among some MPs that Labour might end the system under which the Leader of Government receives no advance notice of questions.

MPs are also worried that the Prime Minister might introduce a similar system to that used for Commons questions to ministers, under which members table questions days in advance, but are allowed a supplementary question on the same issue.

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CARL ROYLE/NEWSTEAM



Spice Girls Geri and Emma arriving at Manchester Opera House yesterday to rehearse for the Prince's Trust 21st anniversary celebration

Girl power spices up Prince's evening

By RUSSELL JENKINS

THE Spice Girls sang live last night for the first time on a British stage to show they can perform their complicated harmonies without the aid of backing tapes.

They started their Manchester show in fine style, ambushing the Prince of Wales during the "line-up" presentation before their gala performance for the 21st anniversary of the Prince's Trust. Mel B and Geri left the line and simultaneously kissed the Prince, leaving

big lipstick marks on his cheeks and the rest of his face just as red. They then asked him if they could come to dinner at the palace some time: his reply is not known.

The "girl power" singing demonstration, aimed at silencing critics who claim they are an over-hyped studio phenomenon, came at the end of the gala performance. The all-girl band has to move only one further down the line of succession from the Prince of Wales before they reach their biggest royal fan: Geri, Victoria, Emma, Mel C

and Mel B are Prince William's favourite group.

They topped the bill with Phil Collins, Julian Clary, Michael Barrymore and Jennifer Aniston, a star of the American sitcom *Friends*.

Security was tight around Manchester's Opera House where the Spice Girls' usual audience of screaming teenagers was replaced by the North West's showbusiness "aristocracy", all in black tie and evening dress and paying £175 a ticket. Extra police were drafted in to control the crowds "star

sighting" outside the venue on Quay Street and, earlier in the day, the auditorium and surrounding areas were checked with high-tech equipment and sniffer dogs.

The girls met the Prince again at the end of the concert, which was hosted by Sir David Frost and Joanna Lumley. They left little to chance for a performance that was taking on much more importance than a mimed rendition of their latest hit. They rehearsed their routine at the Apollo Theatre, Ardwick Green, during the day.



Happy eaters tuck into a big Chinese

FROM JONATHAN MIRSKY IN HONG KONG

CHRIS PATTEN and Helmut Kohl, two of the mightiest eaters among world leaders, yesterday demolished one of the mightiest meals Hong Kong could provide.

Although many here think a second Anschluss will occur on July 1, the colony's Governor and the German Chancellor forgot dull cares and wolfed down the "Guangdong Deluxe Dim Sum" lunch at Yung Kee's, Hong Kong's most famous goose restaurant. The Himalayas of roast goose served in its many variations there would make a trencherman like Helmut Kohl weep with greedy pleasure.

The £30 menu, with spelling mistakes, was: steamed dumpling with crab spaw-

noodles; steamed shrimps in dumpling; steamed vegetable and pork in dumpling; steamed egg yolk and sweet cream in bun; deep fried turnip balls; deep fried chopped crab meat; steamed scallop in dumpling; fried dumpling; roasted goose; fresh shredded seafood and bean curd soup; fresh lobster ball and yellow fufus; mushroom with fresh vegetables; steamed fresh garoupa; crabmeat with noodle in soup; deluxe dessert and seasonal fruit platter, washed down with Tsingtao beer, from a north Chinese brewery founded in the last century by Germans. Afterwards, feeling peckish, Mr Patten stopped off at his favourite bakery for egg tarts.

Shares again at record high

The stock market reached a new record for the sixth consecutive day amid optimism about the interest rate outlook in America and the UK.

The FTSE 100 share index closed up 50.5 at 4630.9 last night following another 50-point rise on Wall Street overnight. However, the pound closed sharply down for the second day running, falling two and half pence to DM2.4721 as the US dollar also lost ground against the mark and the Japanese yen. Pages 27, 30

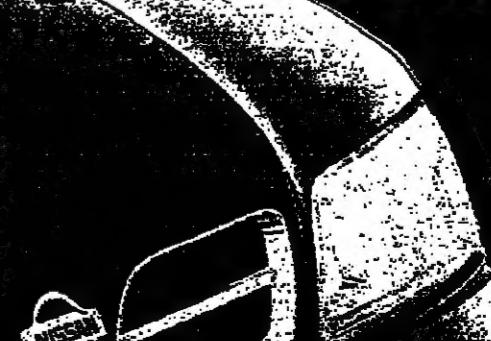
Gold coin marks royal anniversary

The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh visited the Royal Mint at Llantrisant and struck two gold coins to mark their 50th wedding anniversary. They also went to Aberfan and met survivors of the 1966 disaster.

It is the first time in the history of modern UK coinage that the monarch's effigy does not appear alone on a coin. A version with a face value of £5 will be available nearer the anniversary, on November 20. Page 6



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Agreement can be reached at EU summit, says Cook

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE new diplomacy towards the European Union was already reaping rewards and would lead to the Government reaching a deal with its EU partners at the Amsterdam summit, Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, said yesterday.

Speaking after a two-hour meeting at Downing Street between Tony Blair and Wim Kok, the Dutch Prime Minister, who will host next month's talks, Mr Cook said that Mr Blair was in a "strong, authoritative" position in Europe and that the Government was confident of securing the retention of UK border controls at the signing of the proposed EU treaty. Britain now negotiates from strength in Westminster and with respect in Europe."

The London meeting, held at Mr Kok's request, ended a hectic first week as Prime Minister for Mr Blair who was told yesterday that President Clinton will extend his visit to Europe at the end of this month to pay a visit to Downing Street.

Mr Cook claimed that Labour's willingness to sign up to the social chapter of the Maastricht treaty marked a breakthrough in Britain's re-



Wim Kok said that compromise needed

lationship with its European partners which would be followed by greater co-operation. However, Labour leaders insisted that Britain would not bow to pressure to give up the country's external border controls, and Mr Kok admitted that "burning issues" remained to be resolved before agreement could be reached in Amsterdam. Mr Cook is pressing for legal commitment from EU member countries acknowledging Britain's

Dobson orders early end to 'two-tier' NHS

By IAN MURRAY, MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

AN IMMEDIATE start is to be made on dismantling many of the key NHS reforms introduced by the Conservatives. Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary, announced yesterday that he wants an action plan drawn up through the summer and autumn to get rid of the internal market created in 1989.

He has asked Alan Langlands, the NHS chief executive, to draw up "with vigour" a plan to slash bureaucracy, abolish efficiency targets and end the "two-tierism" he believes gives unfair advantages to funding GPs. He said: "There are examples galore where the so-called internal market, in which GP

fundholders and health authorities buy services from NHS trusts, has led to a two-tier health service."

Mr Dobson, speaking to officials at the NHS Executive headquarters in Leeds, promised not to introduce wholesale reforms on the 1989 scale: "The imposition of further upheaval could not be justified in terms of cost alone. More importantly, it would be confusing for the public and grossly unfair on staff."

Among changes promised almost immediately were a review of the way resources were split between primary and secondary care, and steps to ensure fundholders did not enjoy unfair advantages.

opt-out from the treaty's removal of external border controls from member states. The Government is concerned that an opt-out which was not set out in strict legal terms could be overruled at a later date.

Mr Cook made clear that the Government would not relinquish Britain's veto on defence, security, justice and home affairs, and said that British ministers were making "substantial progress" in securing their objectives.

However, after the lunchtime session between the national leaders and their foreign ministers, there were doubts over the precise nature of the compromise to be struck at Amsterdam. Mr Kok said that Britain's move on the social chapter constituted "an enormous step forward", but that there were still issues to be sorted out. "We have listened very carefully to what Prime Minister Blair and Minister Cook said, but it would be an exaggeration if I were to say that it will be easy to find solutions for all of those difficult problems," he said.

Mr Kok requested the meeting to establish the level of support he can expect from Britain under Labour in pushing through moves towards further EU integration. The Dutch, current holders of the EU presidency, seem to have accepted that under Labour, Britain will insist on retaining border controls.

Mr Kok said: "Compromises will be needed all over Europe. Without compromises there will be no Treaty of Amsterdam."

Mr Cook said that he would be "demanding an agreement that gives us a clear legal basis for Britain retaining those border controls."

"Our case was heard with courtesy and we got a good and positive response. I now believe that it will be possible for us to reach an agreement at Amsterdam and we have told the presidency that it will be our intention to come to

Auckland to reach agreement provided that we are satisfied that British national interests have been served."

It is also expected to be

a tussle over the original costume — a white suit decorated with red balls which Lenny Lottery wore for guest appearances and was rumoured to have cost The Sun £1,000. The costume is now hanging in his wardrobe in Billericay, Essex.

Piers Morgan, Editor of The Mirror, said last night: "It is correct that Mr. Lottery has today joined the Mirror. He will continue to use his name, on which he has full copyright, although in the office we may refer to him by his full name of Leonard Lottery, since we feel he has moved upmarket."

Mr Lottery said of his appointment: "I want to be on the winning team and I feel like I have won the jackpot."



Lenny Lottery, formerly known as Aidan McGurran

Lenny Lottery goes for jackpot with rival paper

By CAROL MIDDLETON, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

A FRESH battle between Britain's warring tabloids erupted yesterday after Lenny Lottery, The Sun's prized National Lottery correspondent, decided to try his luck at The Mirror.

Executives at The Sun were consulting copyright and trademark lawyers over the poaching of Lenny Lottery — reporter Aidan McGurran, 34 — who changed his name by deed poll in 1994 when the character was invented by Stuart Higgins, Editor of The Sun.

Since then he has starred in promotional videos and made many television appearances. He started the balls rolling on the BBC's live Christmas lottery show.

Mirror executives, cock-a-hoop at inuring such a figure from their rival, are understood to be intending to use the name as their own. The name was technically trademarked to The Sun, but since a person cannot be stopped from using his own name, it is unlikely legal action can be

taken. "The Sun is not pleased about this at all," an insider said.

It was understood last night that The Sun was intending to rename Brian Flynn, its new lottery correspondent, Sir Lenny Lottery.

There is also expected to be a tussle over the original costume — a white suit decorated with red balls which Lenny Lottery wore for guest appearances and was rumoured to have cost The Sun £1,000. The costume is now hanging in his wardrobe in Billericay, Essex.

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Donald Dewar, the Scottish Secretary, was sworn in to the ancient office of Lord Keeper of the Great Seal at the High Court in Edinburgh. Swearing allegiance to the Queen and her heirs, he became the first Labour MP in 21 years to be appointed as guardian of the seal of Scotland.

First used by Duncan II in 1094, the seal authenticated all state documents until the Act of Union with England was passed in 1707.

School protest

More than 100 pupils broke windows and set off fire alarms and extinguishers at Montgomery School in Sturry, Kent, in protest at the redundancy of five teachers. Rodney Freakes, the headmaster, praised the pupils' loyalty to their teachers and said that their concern would be noted, but he said that the school needed to lose staff because of a £155,000 deficit in this year's budget. The school became grant-maintained four years ago.

Rape verdict

A freelance journalist who refused to stop having sex with a £1,500-a-night prostitute after his condom slipped off was jailed for 2½ years for rape. Kevin Davis, 38, from South Africa, was also found guilty of stealing the woman's £500 from her purse.

At the Old Bailey, Sir Lawrence Verney, QC, Recorder of London, said the well-spoken blonde, aged 22, "was willing to have sexual intercourse only if a condom was used".



Tory associations must lead fight, says Redwood

By ANDREW PIERCE
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

JOHN REDWOOD has appealed to every Conservative association whose MP has been defeated to appoint a political representative in their place to lead the fightback against Labour.

The former Welsh Secretary made the proposal in a letter to every constituency chairman. He said substitute MPs and councillors should be appointed within days in constituencies that lost their MP last week and where the Conservatives no longer had any councillors. Mr Redwood told a Westminster press conference that the party had to face up rapidly to the fact that it had been routed in Scotland, Wales, the North and large parts of the West Midlands.

"Each constituency needs someone to offer political leadership on national issues and someone on local issues. MPs and council majority or minority leaders do the job for us," he said. "Where we have neither, the constituency should choose a parliamentary and a council spokesman."

Each constituency with a former Conservative MP should talk to them about



Redwood: said party had too few members

wing candidates. Mr Cash is unhappy that Mr Redwood might offer Kenneth Clarke, a champion of a single currency, a place in his Shadow Cabinet.

Mr Redwood said: "I have been entirely clear about Europe — none clearer. I have made crystal clear that I don't want to see the abolition of the pound. I am the only one of the leadership contenders to say so in my election manifesto."

"As leader of the party I would take pride in leading the whole party into the lobbies at the single currency if Labour was foolish enough to go ahead."

He rejected a call for constitutional change to ensure that Central Office could sack a candidate who had lost the confidence of the leadership, such as Neil Hamilton, who lost Tatton to Martin Bell. "If the leadership completely lost confidence in a particular MP or candidate, I'm sure that telling that MP or candidate so would have quite an impact upon their future," Mr Redwood said.

The party's problem was that it had far too few members, he added. "I don't think that putting ourselves into huge constitutional rows would be at all helpful."

Local Tories demand vote

Continued from page 1
Wolverhampton, meant the selection process had been rendered unsatisfactory.

He welcomed the National Union proposal for an electoral college. "In all conscience, that is a modest enough change, but its importance is immensely symbolic," he wrote in The Express.

However, there is strong resistance from Tory MPs. Sir Archie Hamilton, the favourite to become the next chairman of the 1922 committee of backbench MPs, which sets the rules, said: "If we expand the franchise to local party members, we would have to offer the same right to members of the House of Lords."

"It is a complicated process. On balance, I would prefer control to remain with the parliamentary party. Sometimes we need to change the

leader, but the grassroots traditionally remain loyal to the leader of the day whoever it is."

Lord Tebbit, a former party chairman, also opposed the move. "Peers would also demand a 20 per cent share of the vote. It would leave MPs, who work closely with the leader, with barely more than half the vote. It could be a disaster. We should look at the rules after a new leader is chosen, not in the immediate aftermath of a heavy defeat."

Some chairman said there could be a further haemorrhaging of membership if activists were excluded.

Brian Grinstead, the chairman of Brighton Kemp Town Conservatives whose MP of 27 years, Sir Andrew Bowden, was defeated last week, said: "Until last week I would have said unequivocally no, on the

basis that the leader has to do his or her job on the floor of the house and the best, in fact only, people who could decide were the MPs."

"Now, I have fundamentally changed my position. It would mean there was no Welsh or Scottish voice in the election of the leader. You cannot elect the leader of a national party if parts of that national party do not have a say."

Alistair Orr, the chairman of Stirling Conservatives, whose MP, Michael Forsyth, was one of the most high-profile casualties of the election, said: "The rules have to be changed. Otherwise it will look like an English party chosen by an English party which will hamper our recovery north of the border."

Green hand, mouth

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Leading article, page 23

THE TIMES SATURDAY MAY 10 1997

The woman who kept her clothes on at Cannes

Dalya Alberge on how the world of the film starlet has changed little, even when one of them breaks the rules

THE film world was not wasting much of its creativity on real life yesterday. Starlets used the same old script to grab attention, just as producers used the same old lines to try to grab a starlet.

But there was one surprise ending at the speeded-up version of the dating game that takes place at the Cannes Film Festival. Angie Everhart, model and would-be actress, found a way to shock everyone. She emerged almost fully clothed in public. Well, really!

The publicist for Ms Everhart, who is 27ish and a former fiancée of Sylvester Stallone, had skillfully ensured a massive turnout at a photocall on the pier, by promising that she would be wearing something so skimpy that the skintight number worn last year by Pamela Anderson would seem like "a nun's habit". In fact the designer of Ms Everhart's feminine, flowing outfit had not saved much on material.

A mob of paparazzi arrived, surging down the pier, crushing a deckchair to bits and trampling over one another to get near her. Those at the front screamed out her name in the hope that she would flirt with their lens. Those at the back held up their cameras above their heads in the hope of



The end of the pier show: Angie Everhart at her photocall yesterday. Other starlets were using more traditional methods to seek attention at the festival

mapping something over the scrum.

That's Cannes. If you want to get noticed, wear the bare minimum, or get the publicists to suggest that you're doing something outrageous. Plus ça change: in the 1950s, a bikini-clad Brigitte Bardot and a topless Simone Sylva came

to symbolise the town's association with sun, sea and sex.

Along the Croisette yesterday, there were several mostly blonde starlets who hoped that history would repeat itself in the traditional way. Miss Toronto, Miss Illinois, Miss Iceland and Miss Alberta — known to their families

back home as Shannon Snider, Vanessa Bednar, Berglind Olafsdottir and Erin Wilson — were on parade, flown over by the Hawaiian Tropic sun care company whose annual publicity pageant attracts more than 20,000 hopefuls. Of the 15 hand-picked by the company's founder, Rob Rice,

each dreams of being discovered by a producer, a director or a casting agent.

This is a world where looking good is all that matters and fairy-tales do come true. Everhart is among numerous models turning actress. Claudia Schiffer flew in yesterday to promote her first film,

Abel Ferrara's thriller *The Blackout*.

Erin Wilson, 22, looked entirely at ease perched on the lap of Mr Rice. She is cute, coquettish and getting noticed, though not always by the right people. She spoke of some of the festival's more suspect characters who have been

handing her their calling-cards, asking her to come up and see them some time.

Mr Rice, who seems to act as a protective father-figure for the girls, decides on whether a card is worth pursuing: 90 per cent are not worth it, he tells his girls. Ms Wilson hopes to go to the right parties to meet the right guys — guys who can make a difference: "I'd like to be a soap opera queen."

Mr Rice has strict rules about early bedtime and no boys at the house. Such is the desperation to make it that some girls — not his girls — are prepared to do anything. The men here know it, and use excruciating chat-up lines. From a producer yesterday: "I'd like another child. What are you doing tonight?"

Perhaps they've just watched too many films. But, for some actresses, such lines do work. The famous casting-couch is far from threadbare. The problem is that it is difficult to stand out from the estimated 100,000 people who have come to the festival. Traffic is almost at a standstill as people are forced off the pavement and onto the roads.

Such is the desperation to see a star that, as soon as a few metal barriers are erected near a hotel or the beach, a crowd assembles in seconds. One girl among those near the Majestic Hotel yesterday said she had no idea whom she might see; she shrugged her shoulders and remained there.

Everyone's attention was on the crowded road, for the first sight of a celebrity: Stallone, The Spice Girls, Li-Hurley and Hugh Grant are among stars expected this weekend. No one is sure exactly when. Not one person was looking the other way, across the serene beauty of the bay.

Schoolboys told to wear blouses as punishment

BY PAUL WILKINSON

A HEADMASTER made a group of 16-year-old boys change into girl's blouses as a punishment for having their shirts signed by friends to mark the end of their GCSE studies.

The boys, pupils at the Cathedral School in Wakefield, had to wear the ill-fitting blouses from the school store to lessons, where they suffered the "big girl's blouse" taunts of their classmates.

Parents of some of the boys have complained about what they say is a public humiliation and are demanding an apology. But the headmaster, Stewart Martin, has refused, saying that he would not tolerate "wilful damage" to property that could set a bad example to the school's younger pupils.

About 12 boys signed the shirts as farewell moments shortly before ending formal lessons and beginning study leave to prepare for their examinations this summer. It is not known how many were ordered to change into blouses.

Pauline Smith, whose son Carl was among those made to change, said: "The punishment did not fit the crime and we will not let this drop."

Her son is 6ft 3in and 18st. "Carl was ridiculed. He is a big lad, and he is conscious of his weight. We don't want an apology for ourselves, but we

think the boys involved should get one."

Another parent, Donald Broughton, has complained to Wakefield education authority. "I thought public humiliation had ended when they did away with the stocks, but obviously not," he said.

"My son Ian had to wear a girl's blouse and a pullover that was ridiculously small. They went back to their classroom and all the students had a good laugh, and so did the teacher. Another teacher brought one of her students dressed similarly. Students from her class followed her to see what all the laughter was about and it escalated."

"I don't feel that humiliation like that by a headmaster is relevant at all. As a head, he may be quite good at his job generally, but he has made a mistake and he should be big enough to apologise."

Mr Martin, 47, is the first head of the school, which formed by a merger of two schools in 1993. He is known as a stickler for the rules and a disciplinarian. Although it is a Church school it has no direct link with the cathedral.

John McLeod, chief education officer for Wakefield council, said: "Matters of school discipline are for the head and governors of the school concerned and the authority does not comment on questions like this".

PC puts the brakes on riding Miss Marple bike

BY LIN JENKINS

DOMINIC SAATTI embraced his role as community policeman in an affluent Buckinghamshire village, determined to display the traditional virtues of being friendly, helpful and vigilant.

To improve communications, the parish council gave the special constable a mobile phone. However, when he asked for a bicycle, he was less than impressed to be given a girl's light blue fold-up model handed down from the 14-year-old niece of a councillor.

To make matters worse, when Constable Saatti, 24, refused to ride the bike for fear of being laughed at on his rounds in Hazlemere, he was branded "a sulky kid" by Maggie Wisdom, a member of the council, who said she would like to see him use the machine for a month "and then say he can't ride it". The council duly voted to force the policeman to give the bicycle a full trial before paying out £250 for the mountain bike he would have preferred.

The council confirmed that Constable Saatti had told them he would rather stick to patrolling on foot than be seen on "a stupid Miss Marple-style bike". His stance has won the backing of Thames Valley Police, who said they felt unable to take up the offer of the bicycle as they doubted it provided a "suitable image for a uniformed officer".

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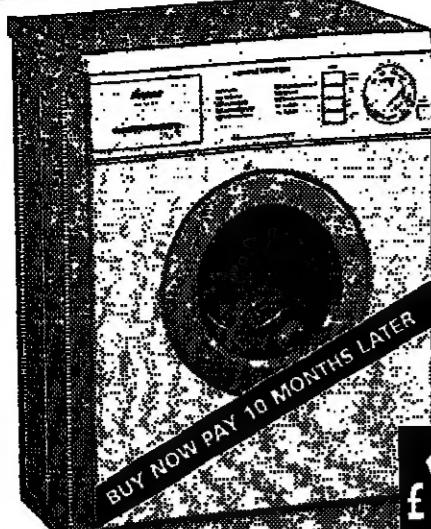
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Lady Ridsdale displays James Bond's fighting spirit after jury acquits men of trying to rob her

Moneypenny is shaken but not deterred by trial

BY JOANNA BALE

TWO young men were acquitted yesterday of conspiracy to rob the woman who was the inspiration for Ian Fleming's Miss Moneypenny.

Victoria Ridsdale, 75, a former intelligence assistant told Southwark Crown Court on Tuesday how she fought off a street robber with a well-aimed kick with a high-heeled shoe after he tried to pull off her wedding ring.

Lady Ridsdale and her husband, Sir Julian, 81, a former Tory MP, were ambushed as they returned to their home in The Boltons, Kensington, after an evening out. Lady Ridsdale's blow to the groin, launched from the passenger seat of her car, left the robber "doubled up in pain", she said. He and his accomplice, who were wearing crash helmets, fled soon after.

Yesterday the jury found Christopher Wynter, 18, and David Stephenson, 20, not guilty. The two men, arrested after being seen on a motorcycle near the robbery scene, said that it was a case of mistaken identity.

After the verdict, Lady Ridsdale said that she had no regrets about giving evidence, despite police warnings that the men could be acquitted. "I had to do my duty."

She worked with Fleming during the war. As the only woman in his office, she acknowledged that she was the writer's inspiration for Miss Moneypenny, the secretary of James Bond's boss, M. Whereas in the novels Miss Moneypenny's love for Bond went unrequited, Lady Ridsdale suspects that in real life the roles were reversed. "Fleming based Bond on himself — he was the brave, handsome spy who had women falling at his feet," she said. "He was always wooing me with presents of silk stockings."

They married in 1942 and their daughter Penny was born in their family home in The Boltons during an air raid. Sir Julian spent 38 years as MP for Harwich, Essex, and Lady Ridsdale, once chairman of Conservative MPs' Wives, was made a Dame of the British Empire in 1991 for political services.

While giving evidence, she said she was able to kick her assailant hard because she was wearing a "good pair of solid high heels". The shoes, black mock-crocodile leather, were bought for her by a friend from Marks & Spencer.

"It was my first reaction to kick him and I'm glad I had the right shoes on. Good old Marks & Sparks! I have good muscles in my legs — I used to do ballet as a girl — so I managed to give him quite a kick and he doubled up in pain."

The couple say that they are not fearful of another mugging. "We have lived through bombings during the war and we had an IRA bomb up the road last year, so we're not frightened by street robbers."



Lady Ridsdale and Sir Julian. They were outside their Kensington home when she fought off two robbers who tried to steal her jewellery

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Alan Hamilton
sees the first
reunion of
those who
lived through
the tragedy
of October 1966

THE Queen yesterday visited Aberfan, the small Welsh village whose name forever occupies a grieving corner of the nation's memory, and met survivors of the disaster of more than 30 years ago.

On October 21, 1966, a man-made mountain of coal slurry slipped in the heavy rain and buried a school, taking the lives of 116 children and 28 adults. The world in which such a disaster could happen may seem remote to future generations. These days in the region, white-gloved workers assemble television sets, the valleys are green again, and only one deep-mining colliery remains.

The presence of the Queen, who was visiting South Wales, brought together the bereaved and the survivors for the first time in more than 30 years. Eighty people were there to shake hands with the Queen and she made a point of speaking to every one, including 12 survivors who had been

children at the time, and four of their former teachers.

It was the Queen's third visit to Aberfan; she was on the scene eight days after the tragedy, and returned in 1973. Yesterday's meeting took place in the village community centre. Earlier, the Queen, accompanied by the Duke of Edinburgh, had visited the site of the school, now a tranquil memorial garden.

where she planted a tree of remembrance.

As though in memory of the original event, the sky threatened, but the forecast heavy rain, of the kind that caused the disastrous landslip, held off. The Queen, in a plum-coloured woolen coat and accompanied by Ron Davies, the new Welsh Secretary, on his first ceremonial outing since Labour's general election victory, was cheered on her walkabout by a new generation of Aberfan schoolchildren who now live in a better world without coal tips.

Yesterday's gathering was organised by Cliff Minett, chairman of the Aberfan Memorial Committee, who lost a son and daughter in the disaster. "The Queen asked to meet survivors and bereaved people. Some were in hospital when the Queen first came here, and others were just too upset to meet her."

Howell Williams, now 56, was a PE teacher at the school

in 1966. He survived while children around him perished.

"I don't think anyone has known how to cope with what happened. There was no counselling or anything like that; various individuals or groups have gone their own way. I have never been able to face some of the parents: I woke up

this morning and was not looking forward to it."

Mr Williams recalled the foggy morning when he saw the coal tip sliding towards his school. "Miraculously, I survived unharmed, yet four children by my side died instantly."

Gareth Jones, now 40, was among the pupils who sur-

vived. "This is only about the third or fourth time I have been back here, and I only live up the road at Merthyr. A gathering like this would not have happened without the Queen: I think it is nice that she remembers the village after all these years."

Gaylor Madgwick and Ja-

nett Smart, both now 39, stood together to meet the Queen. They had been eight-year-old classmates in 1966.

One was pulled from the slurry by a grandfather, the other climbed to safety through the school roof. "I was completely submerged; I suffered a broken femur and crushed hand, but I was conscious throughout," Mrs Madgwick said. Her schoolmate recalled the rumble that sounded like an express train, clouds of steam and smoke, and an avalanche of slurry slamming through the school wall.

When the Aberfan tragedy happened, she had been married for only 19 years and had reigned for a mere 14. In the Queen's golden anniversary year, she is custodian of a remarkably long segment of the nation's memory.



The Queen visiting Aberfan yesterday with, right, Ron Davies, the new Welsh Secretary. It was her third visit since the disaster

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Adams intends to use the House, but not his seat

By NICHOLAS WATT AND ARTHUR LEATHLEY

SINN FEIN is seeking to reap the rewards of victory at the polls with its two new MPs exploiting every facility at the House of Commons short of taking their seats in the chamber.

In a significant softening of the traditional abstentionist policy, Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness want to set up offices at Westminster with telephone and fax lines. They also hope to cash in on the generous travelling and secretarial expenses for MPs. The members for West Belfast and Mid-Ulster intend to make their first trip to Westminster by the end of the month to stage a high-profile press conference in which they will demand a place at the all-party talks at Stormont.

Mr Adams, who will discuss his plans with Sinn Fein's "British desk" this weekend, said: "We will go to the House of Commons. We will use the facilities afforded to us and will utilise them to the best advantage of those who elected us."

However, the Sinn Fein president, who has earned up to £200,000 from his autobiography, is unlikely to succeed in filling his party's coffers with taxpayers' money. The rules for the House of Commons, which are set out in Erskine May, say that MPs cannot collect any allowances or sala-

ries unless they swear the oath of allegiance to the Queen. Mr Adams and Mr McGuinness, who refuse to swear the oath, will also struggle to secure offices at Westminster. The Liberal Democrats, who are in charge of allocating offices to the smaller parties, said that they would be making no great effort to help.

The refusal of the two MPs to swear the oath of allegiance means that they will each receive a package of more than £100,000. MPs are paid a salary of £43,860; this is supplemented by an allowance of £47,568 to cover the costs of running an office and a further £12,287 to run two homes.

Sinn Fein's new position, which Mr Adams describes as "active abstentionism", marks a significant watering down of the party's abstentionist policy, which has been a central plank of Irish republicanism this century. Some observers in Northern Ireland believe that the new policy shows that Sinn Fein is inching towards embracing constitutional politics. However, Unionists say that Sinn Fein is once again refining its old policy of "the armalite and the ballot box" as it advances republicanism by increasingly sophisticated methods.

Sinn Fein's plans for Westminster cut no ice yesterday with Dr Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary. Speaking during a tour of Ballymena, Co Antrim, Dr Mowlam said that Sinn Fein would show that it was still committed to the "ballot box and violence" if the party's new MPs went to Westminster before an IRA ceasefire.

He added: "I think in that sense they are trying to have their cake and eat it. That is playing games with democracy. I am not interested in people who play games with democracy."

LUCIANO PAVAROTTI arrived in London yesterday for his first recital at the Royal Opera House for 18 years (Carol Midgley writes). The celebrated tenor marked the occasion by being photographed publicly

for the first time with the young lover who forced him to shed three stone by limiting his pasta intake. His weight is now estimated at 21 stone. Nicoletta Mantovani, 27, who is 34 years his junior, gazed adoringly at

the singer as they stood together in the sunshine outside the Hyde Park Hotel. Last year Pavarotti left his wife Adusa for Miss Mantovani, his personal assistant, after 30 years of marriage. Under Italian divorce law

the couple cannot marry for another year. Pavarotti's recital on Sunday will include excerpts from Puccini's Tosca as well as works by Donizetti and Bellini. All the tickets, costing up to £160, are sold.

Pavarotti flies in to serenade London on a lighter note

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Three Navy missile systems are found to be unreliable

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

THE Royal Navy has been forced to carry out comprehensive checks on three of its principal missile systems because of concern over their effectiveness. Although there is no technical fault common to the three systems, there are problems with reliability.

The missiles are the Sea Dart, a ship-to-air medium-range weapon carried in aircraft carriers and destroyers, the Sea Wolf, a high-speed defence anti-missile and anti-aircraft system, fitted in most frigates, and the Sea Skua, an anti-surface ship missile, carried by the Lynx helicopter.

The embarrassment for the Royal Navy is that because of budget cuts and delays in maintenance programmes, all three systems are having to be checked at the same time. Missiles sold as part of warship sales to countries such as Brazil and South Korea are also having to be investigated.

The spokesman said that missiles were all test-fired before they were fitted in warships for operational duties. "Ships now at sea all have full war loads of missiles," he said.

The Ministry of Defence re-

cently sold Brazil four Type 22 Broadsword-class frigates armed with Sea Wolf missiles, which will have to be refurbished.

However, the Navy said it was confident that the missiles on board warships on operations at sea were working and would function "if there is a war tomorrow".

The Navy spokesman said: "The fact that all three systems are being refurbished at the same time is due to unavoidable consequences." All missile systems had to be maintained to "extremely high standards of safety and serviceability".

The spokesman said that missiles were all test-fired before they were fitted in warships for operational duties. "Ships now at sea all have full war loads of missiles," he said.

The Sea Dart is the oldest of the weapons, designed in the 1960s and introduced into

service in the 1970s. It has a range of 25 miles and was used successfully in the Falklands War in 1982. Royal Navy sources said that the Sea Dart was at the end of its operational effectiveness but had to be kept going until well into the next century.

The Sea Wolf, introduced in the 1980s, has been updated. There is a faster vertically launched version fitted to the Navy's Type 23 frigates which will be unaffected by the refurbishment programme. However, there was a problem with the older model of the close-range weapon.

The Sea Skua, which was developed just in time for the Falklands War and was launched against Iraqi naval vessels in the 1991 Gulf War, has a range of more than 12 miles. It was said to have only minor problems.

The Navy would not say how much the refurbishment programme will cost.



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Defeated Tories rent their homes to Labour MPs

By POLLY NEWTON AND STEPHEN FARRELL

NEW MPs have begun combing the streets of Westminster and beyond for affordable homes convenient for Parliament. One even plans to take to the water.

Candy Atherton, who beat Sebastian Coe to win the Falmouth and Camborne seat for Labour, hopes to buy a narrowboat today. She will then have to find a convenient mooring. Ms Atherton, a former mayor of Falmouth, lived on a narrowboat moored in the borough for six years until 1992.

"It was my little bit of sanity in the city," she said. "There is something about being near water ... Being the MP for Falmouth and Camborne, I'm a bit more used to it."

Her colleagues seeking homes on dry land have found one potentially fruitful source: defeated Tory MPs with properties to let. Hazel Blears, Labour MP for Salford, began her search at Dolphin Square, the riverside development where annual rents range from £5,000 to £20,000 and there is a 12-month waiting list.

She had a hiccup from a friend in the Commons that several Conservatives were moving out. "I bumped into him in the lift. It was pure chance. I've told lots of others," she said. The family coffers needed to be raided for the deposit: "I have had to borrow it from my mum."

Kali Mountford, the new Labour member for Colne Valley, said that she would be staying with friends at least until the arrival of her salary cheque at the end of the month. "I was unemployed for a year before the election and I've got no money."

Standing next to her, Dari Taylor, Labour's new MP for Stockton South immediately offered either a bed or floor space in the flat in Pimlico that she hopes to take over from the former Labour MP Jack Thompson.

Estate agents report a stream of calls from outgoing Tory MPs anxious to sell or to let. Some have already placed £25 classified advertisements in Parliament's in-house magazine.

Teresa Gorman, despite holding her Billericay seat, has relet her £750,000 three-bedroom house in Lord North Street for £650 a week since the election.

Jonathan Miles, of the Kensington agents Daniel Smith, received the first of three calls from Tory MPs wanting to sell their flats the day after the election. Adrian Owen, manager of Hamptons International in Pimlico, took calls from several Tories, including one former Cabinet minister, wanting to let.

He said: "With the market rising, most Tory MPs with properties in Westminster are hanging on to them as investments. They can get £200 a week for a one-bedroom studio flat and up to £2,000 a week for a large Westminster house."

"We have had a few inquiries from new Labour MPs on the sales side but generally it is their press secretaries and personal assistants looking for lettings without giving names. They don't particularly want to be seen buying flats for £150,000 which is what they'll need for a nice one-bedroom pied-à-terre north of the river."

"Of course, they could go south for about £30,000 to £120,000. Kennington has some beautiful Georgian places but it's riddled with council estates — which might be more politically correct for them, of course."

Labour winners with a nostalgic bent have tried to move to County Hall, formerly the party's spiritual London home as headquarters of the Greater London Council. It has recently been converted into apartments and a hotel.

A spokesman for the management company said that there had been a rush of inquiries about letting the remaining one and two-bedroom flats since the election.

However, as the new intake rued their lack of preparation, Vicki Cotterell of Dauntson Residential in Pimlico, said that some Conservatives had hedged their bets months ago.

"Quite a few gave two months' notice at the beginning of the year because they knew something was up. They went off to stay at their gentlemen's clubs until the election, until they saw how things turned out. Some were planning to buy places. If they won, but obviously not now," she said.

New Labour old Humphrey: Cherie Blair with the Downing Street cat who first worked with Mrs Thatcher

Blairs keep Humphrey in the picture

By EMMA WILFREY

DOWNTON STREET'S greatest political survivor took a photocall yesterday with one of the newer arrivals, to demonstrate that he will work with new Labour. The official appearance with Cherie Blair was felt to be necessary because, despite all the other vital matters that have occupied the nation over past weeks, one of the greatest issues of public concern has been the future of Humphrey the cat.

The champion mouser made his

debut at 10 Downing Street in 1989 during the last years of the Thatcher Government, and his food is on the Cabinet Office budget. However, concern grew that he might have to move home after reports that the new Prime Minister's wife found cats unhygienic.

"That is nonsense, as is another report that she is allergic to cats," a Downing Street spokeswoman said. "Cherie and her sister had both a cat and a dog when they were growing up, and one of the first things the children wanted to see when they moved in on

Monday was Humphrey. This is Humphrey's home and, as far as the Blairs are concerned, it will remain his home."

Humphrey, who has a fondness for chasing the ducklings in St James's Park and was recently suspected of the murder of two robins in the No 10 garden, is on a low-protein diet because of kidney problems. He disappeared in 1995 and was thought to have died, but he had taken up temporary residence at the Royal Army Medical College.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Wedgwood has change of heart on anniversary

Wedgwood has decided, after all, to produce commemorative items for the Queen's golden wedding anniversary. The change of heart came after the Stoke-on-Trent pottery company received many calls from *Times* readers who had seen yesterday's report that it would not do so.

The company said that, after an emergency board meeting, designers were working on a range of items. "We were surprised by the public reaction," a spokeswoman said.

Appeal refused

The father of the snooker player Ronnie O'Sullivan was refused leave to appeal against his conviction for murder. Ronald O'Sullivan, 43, was jailed for life in 1992 at the Old Bailey for stabbing Bruce Bryon, a driver for the Kray twins' elder brother Charlie, in a racially motivated attack at a Chelsea nightclub.

Contempt case

The High Court granted John Morris, QC, the Attorney-General, leave to bring contempt proceedings against the London *Evening Standard* over a report that led to the trial of six alleged fugitives from Whitemoor prison being abandoned. The paper printed photographs and referred to the defendants' IRA links.

Butterfly survey

A two-year survey was launched to try to halt the decline of the pearl-bordered fritillary, one of Britain's 16 most endangered species of plants and animals. The survey, by Butterfly Conservation, aims to locate all colonies of the insect and to identify the habitats best suited for its survival.

Vaughan award

The singer Frankie Vaughan, 67, received the insignia of the CBE from the Prince of Wales at Buckingham Palace. He was honoured for his singing and for his work with the National Association of Boys Clubs. He said later: "It's just wonderful. Prince Charles asked how my voice was and if I was still gargling with port."

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New Labour old Humphrey: Cherie Blair with the Downing Street cat who first worked with Mrs Thatcher

By EMMA WILFREY

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Evangelical 'super church' aims to be all things to all the community

Ruth Gledhill finds that a new £2.4m worship and leisure centre reflects the growth of Britain's 'Bible belt'

AN AMERICAN-STYLE "super church" has opened in the heart of Britain's burgeoning Bible belt. It is thought to be the first development of its kind here.

On Sundays, the £2.4 million King's Centre in Chessington, Surrey, will be an evangelical church welcoming hundreds of worshippers from a local community of about 20,000. During the week, the massive sports and church complex in the heart of a modern housing estate will operate as a leisure and community centre. It has been built in conjunction with Kingston upon Thames Borough Council in a rare partnership between non-established church and State.

Surrey is part of a Bible belt

that stretches across southeast England, where churchgoing is rising rapidly among evangelicals, offsetting a continuing decline in other church traditions, in particular in the liberal wing. The success of the evangelical movement, which consists of some mainstream Anglican, Roman Catholic and Methodist churches, as well as rapidly growing "new" churches, is thought to be a product of a modern desire for spiritual certainties in an increasingly uncertain world.

Nationally, 28 per cent of England's 3.7 million churchgoers are evangelicals, but in pockets of Surrey, such as Guildford and Woking, nearly 50 per cent of all churchgoers would identify themselves as evangelicals. Examples of thriving new churches include Gerald Coates's Pioneer movement, which meets weekly in a cinema in Esher, Surrey, and once a month in a sports hall in Leatherhead. Many other evangelical churches have been forced to move as they have grown.

The King's Centre is thought to be the first sports hall to be purpose-built for a church. It is



The pastor, Trevor Archer, in the dual purpose centre with the manager, Bob Robinson, left, and fellow pastor John Tindall

being run by the Chessington Evangelical Church, which has 400 members and belongs to the Federation of Independent Evangelical Churches. Until now it has met in a community college near by.

The centre is open from Monday for arts and crafts workshops. Weekly classes include old-time dancing, tap, ballet and disco, fitness workouts, painting tuition, indoor bowls, football training, racquet sports and volleyball. There will also be youth groups, Bible classes and adult education classes covering hobbies, crafts, self-improvement and languages.

Next week, the centre will be used as an examination hall, and it is expected to be hired out for conferences and other events. In

the sports hall, where the church meets, chairs like those used at the Atlanta Olympics have been imported from the United States.

The full-time staff are all church members and the centre is owned and operated by the church under a management agreement with the local authority. In some respects it is comparable to American evangelical church complexes, which offer a wide range of health, social and community services as well as regular worship. However, the Chessington church leaders are anxious not to be associated with the excesses of some American evangelicalism. There are no plans for any form of "televangelism".

Keith Ewing, of the Evangelical Alliance, an umbrella group cover-

ing most of Britain's evangelical churches, said: "We have never before come across anything as radical and big as this. It is part of a wider re-engagement with the community. Churches are seeing their role as being back at the very heart of the community." Trevor Archer, the pastor, said: "This church is a hybrid. It has never been done before in this country, and some people said it could not be done."

Chessington evangelicals raised £1.5 million towards the cost. Other money was donated by Christian charitable trusts and £375,000 came from the local authority.

Mark Gilks, former develop-

ment director at Kingston council, said the centre had grown out of "an amazing courage and vision".

"In this place, a child will learn to dance, a young person will learn team skills they didn't have, a lonely person will enjoy fellowship again, a single parent will receive support and a person in spiritual need will discover meaning."

At Your Service

Weekend, page 15

Parish pump and city square are twin poles of faith

Stephen Platten

"IN OBSERVING the Great Feast of Easter they followed doubtful rules... being so isolated from the rest of the world." So Bede, the 8th-century church historian, wrote of St Columba, the great Celtic saint who brought the Gospel to Iona and, through his disciple St Aidan, to Northumbria.

In this year of anniversaries, we celebrate Columba, who died in 597, but we celebrate also St Augustine of Canterbury. Sent by Pope Gregory the Great to evangelise the English, he arrived in Kent in that same year. It is to them that the great pilgrimages this month and next from Rome through Canterbury to Londonderry are dedicated.

It has become fashionable to polarise the two traditions symbolised in Columba and Augustine. The Celtic mission stands for local traditions, a love of creation, the honouring of women and an attractive rhythm of prayer. The Roman mission is about order, universality, hierarchy and, in some circles, the hegemony of Rome. The final showdown, between the two was at the Synod of Whitby in 664, where there was a sell-out to the Romans. The attack was led by the single-minded, prelatical and rapacious St Wilfrid, Bishop of York, who sent the bucolic and misguided Celts packing. Wilfrid is not the most lovable of the English saints, but he is a good starting point if we are to unravel the truth behind this year's great celebrations.

Wilfrid was a Northumbrian, formed in the Celtic tradition under the tutelage of the godly Aidan on Lindisfarne. He travelled to Rome, where he learnt of a wider world. Wilfrid represents the confluence of two traditions.

He lived the remote life of a Celtic monastery, but was also inducted into the cosmopolitan world of mainland Europe.

Here lies the great contrast between the twin roots of our Christian culture. Celtic missionaries worked largely in the untaught countryside of Ireland, Scotland and Northumbria. They were utterly dependent upon the elements and the natural creation. Their loyalty to Rome was unquestioned, but local culture and a tough landscape coloured their spiritual teaching.

The Roman mission, characterised in Gregory and Augustine, was ordered and urban. Each city had its own bishop and the parish network covered the moribund Roman Empire. A pattern of communication, reaching all the way back to Rome, was established.

Fourteen hundred years later, we can see the essential complementarity of these two pioneering models of evangelisation. Columba reminds us to treasure our roots and thus the local Church. Augustine points us to the need for unity and to the universality of both our common humanity and of the Gospel itself. If I offer Columba, the last word, in the form of his deathbed prayer, it is because he speaks of that reconciliation and complementarity, which lie at the heart of the Christian message.

"See that you be at peace among yourselves, my children, and love one another; follow the example of good men of old; and God will comfort you and help you, both in this world and in the world which is to come."

□ The Very Rev Stephen Platten is Dean of Norwich

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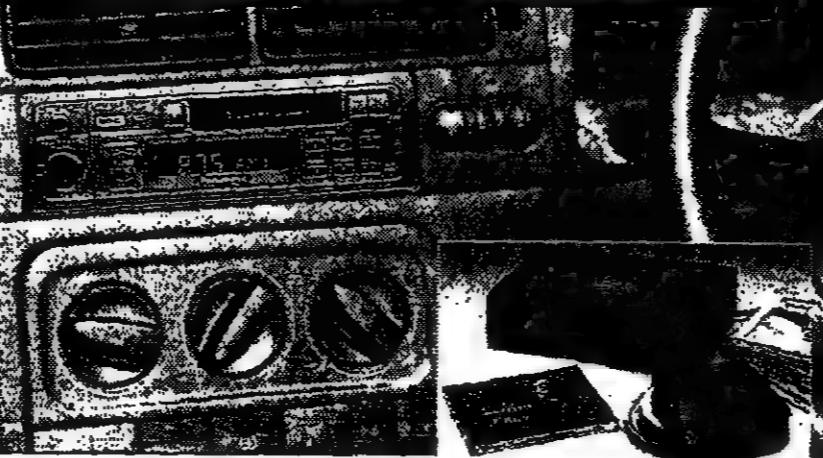
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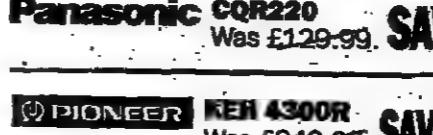
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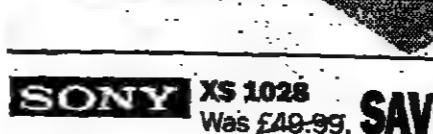
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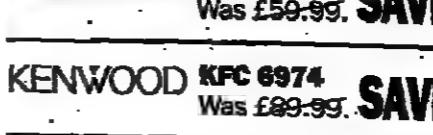
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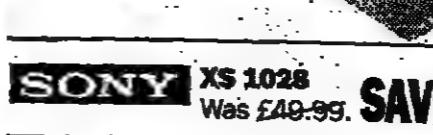
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'One mother watched in tears. It was almost as if the scriptwriters had read her son's case notes'

EastEnders praised for breaking taboo on schizophrenia

BY ALEXANDRA FREAN, SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

THE descent into schizophrenia of the teenage character Joe Wicks in *EastEnders* has prompted thousands of calls from "sufferers" and their families.

The National Schizophrenia Fellowship said yesterday that the story on Britain's most widely watched programme had attracted unprecedented attention and broken society's taboo on talking about the mental illness.

The gradual breakdown over several months of Joe Wicks, played by Paul Nicholls, 18, has been witnessed by up to 22 million viewers.

The fellowship said the story on the BBC soap opera had done more to break the stigma attached to schizophrenia, which affects 250,000 people in Britain, than any number of worthy media appeals.

Although Joe was diagnosed as having schizophrenia only this week, it has been clear to *EastEnders* fans for months that he was descending to mental illness. He has been hearing voices and has complained about evil forces trying to get to him.

Ian Aldwinkle, the programme's story editor, said that he had decided to introduce a character with schizophrenia after working on editions of the drama series



A schizophrenia bulletin praising *EastEnders*

Grocery, which featured violent and dramatic incidents involving people with the illness.

"When I did the research I was shocked to discover that schizophrenia affects one in 100 people, and yet nobody ever talks about it," he said.

"All you could ever do with *Casualty* was the medical side of it. Because it has a confusing storyline, *EastEnders* was able to look at the effect that schizophrenia has on a family and on individual relationships."

I wanted to humanise it and look at the emotional impact it has on people."

Mr Aldwinkle said that,

although the purpose of *EastEnders* was primarily to entertain rather than to educate, he hoped that the Joe Wicks storyline would be helpful. "It seems to me that mental illness is one of the last subjects that you can still make jokes about without being labelled politically incorrect, and that seems wrong.

"If I get just one letter from one person saying that the character of Joe Wicks has helped to change their life for the better, then I will be pleased."

Fiona Carr, a spokeswoman for the fellowship, said that it had received scores of telephone calls from people praising the sensitive way in which the programme had portrayed schizophrenia.

"One mother who rang said she had been watching the programme in tears," Ms Carr said. "She said it was almost as if the *EastEnders* scriptwriters had been reading her son's case notes."

Bharat Mehta, the fellowship's chief executive, said that *EastEnders* had helped to destroy the myths that schizophrenia meant that a person had a split personality and that the illness was likely to make them violent. Although the media often reported cases of schizophrenics who had committed murders, studies



Paul Nicholls as Joe Wicks. The story editor wanted to humanise the illness

have shown that they are less likely to be violent than the general population.

Mr Mehta said that, although schizophrenia accounted for at least 5 per cent of health service spending —

more than any other single illness, including cancer or coronary disease — it was still a taboo subject.

"It remains the last big stigma in society. Barriers have been broken down on

Aids, cancer, Alzheimer's and strokes, but schizophrenia is not something that people readily talk about," he said. "We hope to change that."

Letters, page 23

Patient can sue over 25 years of wrong treatment

BY GLEN OWEN

A MAN who claims doctors wrongly diagnosed him as schizophrenic and forced him to live under the stigma of mental illness for more than 25 years can sue his local health authority, a High Court judge ruled yesterday.

The court heard that David Piper, 49, received his diagnosis in 1966 after visiting a consultant psychiatrist employed by West Kent Health Authority. He was said to be suffering from schizophrenia, depression and anxiety, and spent his nineteenth birthday in hospital.

The treatment, including electroconvulsive therapy and anti-depressant drugs, continued until March 1992, when he was told that the diagnosis had been mistaken. A new assessment found him to be suffering from phobic anxiety.

Judge Geddes yesterday rejected the health authority's case that Mr Piper had left it too late to launch his action. Mr Piper, from Chatham, Kent, is suing for treatment received at Oakwood Hospital in Maidstone, Medway Hospital in Gillingham and All Saints Hospital, Chatham, between 1966 and 1992.

He claims that the health authority was negligent for making the original diagnosis and for failing to review it for 25 years. "When I found out I was not suffering from schizophrenia, I felt very bitter. I had lost all those years and I can't get them back," Mr Piper said

in his evidence. He added that he had since been weaned off the drugs: "For the first time I feel fully alive."

Diana Brahm, counsel for Mr Piper, said that he had lived under the stigma of mental illness and in a state of "almost permanent hibernation". Medical reports showed that Mr Piper had been "simply written off" after the diagnosis, depriving him of regular employment and inhibiting him from forming lasting relationships, she said.

Mr Piper said that the drugs caused frequent stomach aches and vomiting. After a repeat diagnosis of schizophrenia in 1972, his medications were continued by his GPs. "Basically, I did as I was told. I cannot remember all of the details for the prescriptions, but the effect was that I was more or less constantly taking some drug or another."

He had not reported his stomach pains because he was frightened he would be sent back to a mental hospital. In 1991, he consulted a solicitor after reading about compensation for addiction to Valium, one of the anti-depressants he was taking. The solicitor arranged a fresh diagnosis.

After the ruling, Miss Brahm told the judge that Mr Piper was negotiating with the health authority to settle the damages claim, which she later described as "substantial, probably running into six figures".

Hay fever pills 'bigger road risk'

BY IAN MURRAY, MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

A TIPSY driver is less of a danger than one made drowsy by hay fever pills, according to new research.

Scientists at Surrey University found that some antihistamines increased a driver's risk of an accident by a factor of six, compared with a factor of four for a driver who was just over the legal alcohol limit.

"These drugs work because they inhibit the histamine which causes allergic reaction, but which also keeps us awake," Ian Hindmarch, of the university's human psychopharmacology unit, said.

"The ones which cause drowsiness do so because they penetrate the barrier between the bloodstream and the brain. This means they slow reactions and cause tiredness. If we want to reduce the number of accidents, we don't

want people driving around after taking these tablets."

He accepted recent research showing that antihistamines that do not cause drowsiness could be fatal to some people with heart conditions. "The point is that only around 14 people died as a result of this in the course of 15 years. We need to get this in proportion."

Recent research has shown that 4,500 people are killed and another 135,000 are injured each year in the European Union as a result of accidents caused by people taking medicinal drugs. A third of these are people taking antihistamines that cause drowsiness.

Mr Hindmarch said that it was also dangerous to forget medication, because a sneeze would cause a driver to shut his eyes for up to 100 yards.

Veterans pay tribute to Soviet dead

BY JOHN YOUNG

VETERANS of the Arctic convoys and senior Russian officers hosted each other with vodka yesterday to launch a project to erect a London memorial to the 26 million people of the former Soviet Union who died in the struggle against Hitler.

It will stand in the grounds of the Imperial War Museum. A design competition has been opened in Russia and some of the entries were on display yesterday.

The project was initiated by the Society for Co-operation in Russian and Soviet Studies after the VE-Day commemoration two years ago. General Vadislav Pronin, representing the Russian military, said: "We continue to be grateful to our allies for the moral and material support they gave us."

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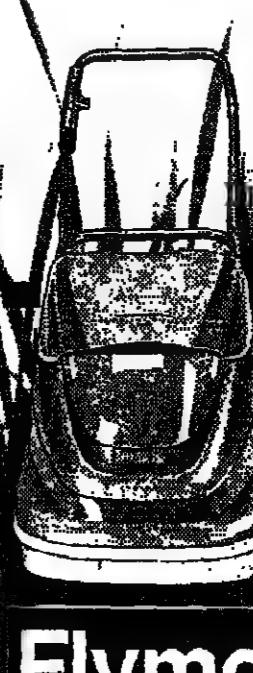
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Immigrants can be starved out, Le Pen tells French voters

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

JEAN-MARIE LE PEN, leader of the extreme-right National Front, pushed his race message to the forefront of the French parliamentary elections yesterday by comparing immigrants to a flock of ravenous birds who could be starved out rather than sent home.

"When you have a cherry tree, you will see swarms of starlings arrive just when the cherries are ripe... they will not leave until all the cherries are gone," M Le Pen, who prides himself on his xenophobic rhetoric, said in a radio interview.

"We should stop giving foreigners what attracts them and explain that we do not have the means to support them or even to employ them. They will leave by themselves. It is not a question of sending them back; we will allow them to leave," he said.

The National Front, campaigning on a "French First" platform, has traditionally argued that France's three million immigrants from Third World countries should be repatriated if they try to remain in France more than one year.

Partly contradicting his own suggestion that immigrants, deprived of support or work, would drift away of their own accord, M Le Pen said that funds to help immigrants to return home could be found by cutting off aid to foreign heads of state. Such money "usually ends up in Swiss bank accounts," he added.

The immigration issue has also been taken up by the mainstream parties in a contest that is growing closer by the day, according to opinion polls.

Responding to an article published yesterday by Lionel Jospin, the Socialist leader, Alain Juppé, the Gaullist Prime Minister, demanded to know how "a massive resumption of clandestine immigration" could be avoided if the Left fulfilled its election promise to scrap the present stringent immigration laws.

The latest opinion poll by the Ipsos institute, published by the magazine *Le Point* yes-



Le Pen: said foreigners would choose to leave

terday, suggests that the left-wing opposition is now closer than ever to bringing off a surprise victory in the two-round election on May 25 and June 1.

The survey predicted that the ruling centre-right coalition would see its huge representation cut, having just 29 seats in the 577-seat National Assembly, thus giving the present Government only one more MP than would be represented if they try to remain in France more than one year.

No opinion poll has yet

predicted an outright majority for the Left and, in a small boost to government hopes, splits have begun to appear in the left-wing alliance of Communists and Socialists. The Communist Party accused M Jospin yesterday of trying to impose "hegemony" on the Left and the party's newspaper, *L'Humanité*, declined to publish in full the Socialist leader's open letter to voters.

The main source of friction on the Left is over the future of European economic and monetary union, with the Communists vehemently opposed to a single currency and the Socialists still broadly supportive of the project, although with reservations.

Robert Hue, the Communist leader, has implied that he may make a referendum on the single currency a precondition for supporting any future Socialist government, prompting M Juppé to ask how M Jospin would "escape a crisis for Europe" if Euroscopic Communist ministers were appointed to a Socialist-led Cabinet.

The National Front, which

is also bitterly opposed to a single currency ("an instrument of servitude" in M Le Pen's words), may play a critical "spoiling" role in the forthcoming elections. Nationwide support for the far-right party remains stable at about 15 per cent, but it appears to be growing in areas of high unemployment and immigration, particularly around its southern strongholds.

The Front is likely to win only a couple, if any, seats in parliament, but if, as predicted, far-right candidates get through to the second round of voting in up to 150 constituencies, they may well be elected from the right-wing and centre parties to the benefit of the Socialists.

M Le Pen, 68, has announced that he will not be standing in these elections in order to "save himself" for the presidential contest in 2002.

Critics respond that the only thing the National Front supremo is saving himself from is a humiliating electoral defeat.

Paris: The Eiffel Tower and Paris buses were decked out with gold-starred European flags yesterday as France celebrated Europe Day with a fervour which organisers insisted was unrelated to the parliamentary election campaign.

More than 3,000 events were being planned across France, half of them sponsored by the pro-federalist European Movement, to mark the anniversary of Robert Schuman's 1950 founding call for the creation of a European community. Other European countries also staged special celebrations to mark the event. (Reuters)

Yeltsin invokes patriotic spirit of veterans

FROM RICHARD BEESTON
IN MOSCOW

TO THE rousing strains of a military band and the thundering march of thousands of goose-stepping soldiers, Russia's elite yesterday turned out to mark the nation's victory over Hitler, and also to ponder its military decline.

On the first hot day of the year, President Yeltsin, flanked by the country's armed forces chiefs, stood to attention at the Lenin Mausoleum in Red Square and called on his countrymen to take inspiration from the example set by the veterans of the Second World War.

"A Victory Day military parade on Red Square is a symbol of Russian soldiers' loyalty to the tradition of the Great Patriotic War heroes," he said, speaking in his capacity as commander-in-chief of the armed forces. "It is the sacred duty of the Russian Army to preserve and augment these traditions."

In Russia — which lost 27 million people during the conflict — VE-Day is still regarded by many as the country's most important national holiday, when lost family members are remembered and the survivors of some of the most bloody battles in history are honoured. Certainly yesterday elderly men and women, some weighed down by the rows of campaign medals pinned to their chests, relived their exploits and brushed away tears for those who did not return from the front.

However, that wartime spirit has all but evaporated in today's Russia. Although the soldiers on parade were well drilled and smartly turned out, the display paled by comparison with previous anniversaries, when the city streets shook with the rumble of tanks and the air vibrated with the roar of jets.

Yesterday, for the first time, no naval personnel took part in the parade, and the gaps in the ceremony had to be filled with incongruous ballroom dancers and folk-singers who pranced uneasily between the serrated ranks of troops. In an annual message to the esti-



Two former Soviet Second World War veterans embrace yesterday at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Moscow, where President Yeltsin addressed the thousands who gathered for the 52nd Victory Day parade

mated 1.5 million men and women in uniform. President Yeltsin this week bemoaned the state of the military and vowed to press ahead with his plans to reform the once mighty Soviet army into a modern professional force. In spite of his pledge, however, experts remain doubtful that the situation in the military will improve soon.

"In Russia today there is no reform to speak of in the armed forces," said a Western military source, well acquainted with the Russian Army.

"Officers go for months without pay. Draft dodging is widespread. Theft of military property, including weapons

is rampant. Discipline has collapsed and officers frequently ignore orders from their superiors."

His grim assessment was backed up by a recent incident near Moscow when some of the country's top fighter pilots refused to take part in a

special air display for the

visiting Chinese president un-

less they were paid. Their

stoppages, one of a number of

cases of insubordination,

ended when their back-pay

quickly appeared.

Mr Yeltsin may not be able

to allow the situation to drift

much longer without running

the risk of a backlash that

could benefit his nationalist

and Communist opponents,

who staged a rival parade

yesterday through Moscow.

General Aleksandr Lebed, a

former paratrooper with presi-

dential ambitions, has fre-

quently given warnings about

the possibility of mutiny,

and yesterday he mocked the

Kremlin's attempts at reform.

The minister of defence

changed his uniform for a

civilian suit, army generals

changed one big star for four

small ones, and that is all that

has been reformed," General

Lebed said. "With such an

approach army reform in

Russia has no future."

In Minsk yesterday, Presi-

dent Lukashenko led a Belarus Victory Day march of 100,000 Jews who died during the Nazi occupation of the Minsk ghetto.

■ London: Britain and Russia yesterday launched a plan to build a memorial to the 27 million people from the former Soviet Union who were killed during the Second World War. The joint project envisages the unveiling of a monument in the grounds of the Imperial War Museum in London in 1998, according to a spokesman at the Russian Embassy. The monument will be made by a Russian sculptor and paid for by public subscription in Russia and other countries. (Reuters)

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Macau police on alert after casino Triad murders

FROM CATHERINE FIELD IN MACAU

THEY used to call it sleepy Macau, an enclave that was good for a relaxing weekend. Portuguese food and *vinho verde*. Now it has become the crime capital of the South China coast, a place haunted by a nightmarish gangland war that has claimed dozens of lives, left scores injured and is scaring off foreign investors.

The Macau Government issued an appeal for calm and placed its police on a war footing to prepare for the weekend influx of gamblers from nearby Hong Kong after three people were murdered in front of the territory's biggest casino last Sunday. A gunman, riding pillion on a motorcycle, drew alongside a car in front of the Lisboa Casino in the heart of Macau and sprayed its interior with bullets, killing its three occupants.

The victims were all key members of the IAK, one of the biggest Triads operating in the Pearl River delta and part of an organised crime network whose tentacles reach into Hong Kong and across the border into mainland China. The police said the trio were associates of the Triad's local "dragon-head", or leader, nicknamed Broken Teeth Koi.

Five days earlier, a 23-year-old Macau-born Eurasian was stabbed to death near the casino after a car chase across the peninsula. A week before, a young nurse was murdered.

The deaths brought the gang-linked murder toll so far this year to 14; last year it was a total of 21. Scores of people have also been injured in stabbing incidents and shops have been damaged by

bombs, police said.

The gang warfare between the IAK and its rival, the Wo On Lok, is aimed at winning control over profits from casino loan-sharking, smuggling, prostitution and drug-trafficking. But what is giving the authorities sleepless nights is that the Triads have also taken on the Government. Last November they attempted to assassinate Lieutenant-Colonel Manuel Antonio Apolinario, then Deputy Director of Ma-

cau's Gambling Inspectorate, in an almost identical drive-by shooting. Colonel Apolinario was shot twice, in the face and neck. Bullets found at the scene were of 7.62mm calibre, the standard issue for Chinese army handguns.

Albano Cabral, the Judiciary Police Deputy Director, has reassured the public and tourists that they are not in the firing line. The recent murders, he said, were the work of "professional killers who don't miss their targets".

Brigadier Manuel Soares Monteiro, the Under Secretary for Security, said: "We are aware there are two main rival elements involved and our efforts are concentrated on the major people connected to these groups." He added that the Government would seek to push through anti-Triad legislation.

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lution to allow police to bug telephones and use high-tech surveillance.

China, which will regain sovereignty over the enclave from Portugal in December 1999, has now entered the fray. Officials in the neighbouring Chinese city of Zhuhai are preparing to give Macau police a list of Triads with known links to gangs operating in the enclave. Zhuhai authorities are alarmed by what is going on, and taking steps to prevent crime spilling over from Macau. Zhuhai, a special economic zone, is a boom area notorious for prostitution and racketeering.

Public anxiety about the violence has sparked demand for personal protection in Macau: one shop, the Long Van Trading Company, said it had run out of bullet-proof vests.

The gang warfare between the IAK and its rival, the Wo On Lok, is aimed at winning control over profits from casino loan-sharking, smuggling, prostitution and drug-trafficking. But what is giving the authorities sleepless nights is that the Triads have also taken on the Government. Last November they attempted to assassinate Lieutenant-Colonel Manuel Antonio Apolinario, then Deputy Director of Ma-

Israel and Jordan in secret attempt to end water crisis

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

MIDDLE EAST peacemaking took another dramatic turn late on Thursday when Israeli and Jordanian leaders met secretly under cover of darkness at the Jordanian Red Sea resort of Aqaba in an attempt to patch up a water dispute that had thrown their relations into crisis.

Details of the meeting were confirmed yesterday after the story found its way to Israel's biggest-selling paper, *Yediot Acharonot*. Binyamin Netanyahu, the Prime Minister, who flew to the meeting in a military helicopter, told his Cabinet that progress had been made on the water issue.

However, he told ministers that no progress had been made in the latest mission by Dennis Ross, the United States special envoy, to rescue the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. To underline the point, rioting erupted again yesterday in the West Bank city of Hebron, leaving four Palestinians and an Israeli soldier injured.

The Aqaba meeting was agreed hastily after Crown Prince Hassan of Jordan snubbed Mr Netanyahu on Tuesday by refusing to attend a ceremony to unveil a memorial to seven Israeli schoolgirls massacred by a Jordanian soldier. Officials accused Israel of breaking out at the last minute from its 1994 accord to help

Mr Sharon said that the

Jordan to find an extra 50 million cubic metres of water a year.

The peace treaty ending a 46-year state of war specified that by November 1995 the two sides would develop a plan to supply Jordan with the water. Ideas included desalination plants, dam building and steps to ease pollution of river water. But no such plan has yet been implemented.

No official reason for the cloak-and-dagger nature of the meeting was given. But diplomatic sources said that the Jordanian public is becoming increasingly disillusioned with the peace process: no mention of the meeting was made in yesterday's Jordanian press. King Hussein was also reluctant to be seen as upstaging the crisis talks involving the United States, Israel and the Palestinians.

Among the Israeli team who flew to Aqaba was Ariel Sharon, the hardline former war hero and Defence Minister, who now is in charge of water resources as part of his National Infrastructure portfolio. It was the first time that the King had met Mr Sharon, a former general, who told Israeli radio: "To my regret, my meetings in the past with the Kingdom of Jordan were in different circumstances of war and fighting."

Mr Sharon said that the

atmosphere at the talks was very positive. Earlier in the week, Fayed al-Tarawneh, the Jordanian Foreign Minister, spoke of a "frustration in the whole peace process" and accused Israel of breaching the peace accord by failing to follow up its commitment to help in finding water for the parched kingdom.

An Israeli Cabinet statement issued yesterday said that after the Aqaba talks, which lasted for several hours, professionals on both sides would continue working on a solution to the dispute.

At the time that the original deal was signed by the late Yitzhak Rabin, many Israelis, including his Labour successor as Prime Minister, Shimon Peres, argued that he had given too much away to Jordan on the water clauses.

This week's dispute has highlighted repeated warnings that, by the next century, water rather than oil may emerge as the main cause of conflict in the Middle East.

The continuing deep distrust between the two sides is made clear by the lack of progress in the Ross shuttle mission, which once again became bogged down in the vexed issue of Jewish settlements. Far from agreeing to a freeze, the Israeli Cabinet issued a statement yesterday which said that "the Government is acting to strengthen settlement".

Saeed Erekat, a senior Palestinian negotiator, told Israeli radio that the US envoy had brought no new ideas. With the prospect of more street violence, Israel's southern army commander told *Yediot* that if the Palestinian police again opened fire on Israeli troops, the Israelis would show much less restraint than they did last September. Then 15 Israelis and 65 Palestinians were killed and 1,500 people wounded.

■ Geneva: The United Nations Committee Against Torture yesterday rejected denials by the Israeli security authorities and called on them immediately to stop using torture in the interrogation of some terrorist suspects.



Douglas "Pete" Peterson, America's Ambassador to Vietnam, is greeted in Hanoi yesterday by Mai Vau On who helped a stricken US Air Force pilot during the war

Ex-warlord jailed on eve of visit by Pope

FROM AGENCIE FRANCE-PRESSE IN BEIRUT

SAMIR GEAGEA, the former Christian warlord, was given the death penalty yesterday for an attempt to assassinate a Lebanese government minister in 1991, but the sentence was commuted to life in jail. The verdict came on the eve of the Pope's visit to Lebanon.

Geagea, already serving two life sentences for murder, was found guilty of the failed attempt against Michel Murr, then the Defence Minister and now the Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister. The

Judicial Council, Lebanon's highest court for state security crimes and whose verdicts cannot be appealed against, ruled after a six-month trial.

It said the sentence was commuted because the bomb attack on Mr Murr occurred before the amnesty law for crimes committed during the 1975-90 civil war. Geagea, 45, commander of the disbanded Christian Lebanese Forces, is the only militia leader from the war to have been put on trial.

Washington's man in Hanoi on mission to heal the past

BY JAMES PRINGLE

A FORMER prisoner of war, Douglas "Pete" Peterson, the first United States Ambassador to arrive in Hanoi since the end of the Vietnam war, pledged yesterday to put the past behind the two countries, but said that the search for America's missing servicemen topped the list of his country's interests in Vietnam.

Mr Peterson's arrival yesterday, establishing full diplomatic relations between the

former adversaries, came more than 22 years after the end of the conflict that left three million Vietnamese and nearly 58,000 Americans dead.

"I am confident that we will not think of ourselves as former adversaries, but as good friends," Mr Peterson said at Noi Bai international airport as he arrived to apparently set the seal on a new relationship.

At the same time, he

stressed that accounting for the 1,589 Americans still listed as missing in action would top his agenda. "America and Vietnam have put the conflict behind them, but finding out what happened to the missing is an urgent task," he said.

At the airport Mr Peterson embraced 80-year-old Mai Van On, a former soldier who rescued John McCain, now a US Senator, from a lake after a failed bombing mission against Hanoi in 1967.

The prison experience consisted mainly of a shared and fetid cell, constant beatings and bug-infested food. "You confront the reality that human beings are rational only by virtue of a thin veneer," he said. "Beneath the veneer is a savage who will do whatever he had to do to survive."

His wife, Barbara, died of cancer in 1995 and his youngest son, Doug, had been killed several years earlier in a car crash. Mr Peterson rarely speaks of these personal traumas.

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Envoy arrives in personal and diplomatic breakthrough

Ex-PoW returns to Vietnam as US Ambassador

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

AFTER more than six-and-a-half years as a prisoner of war in Vietnam, Douglas "Pete" Peterson made a vow never to return to the country of his captivity.

His arrival yesterday as the United States's first Ambassador to Vietnam since the war ended in 1975, and the first ever to take office in Hanoi, was therefore not merely a symbolic sign of reconciliation for both countries, but also a personal catharsis.

"I had enough hate in my life for those years I sat in a cell," Mr Peterson said recently. "Had it continued, I would not have been able to function. I essentially put it behind me the day I walked out of that cell."

Mr Peterson's evolution from tortured prisoner to emissary marks both an extraordinary thawing of diplomatic relations and a shrewd choice by President Clinton, whose dodging of the Vietnam draft has constantly undermined personal attempts at rapprochement with Hanoi.

But in Mr Peterson, 51, a former United States Air Force fighter pilot who endured the worst excesses of the infamous "Hanoi Hilton", the North Vietnamese prisoner of war camp, Mr Clinton has found an ambassador widely praised by all sides: a potent symbol of how America can come to terms with the Vietnam experience.

He flew 66 missions over Vietnam before being shot down near Hanoi. Mr Peterson broke his arm, shoulder, and leg in the fall and, as was customary, the Vietnamese refused to set any of the bones.

The prison experience consisted mainly of a shared and fetid cell, constant beatings and bug-infested food. "You confront the reality that human beings are rational only by virtue of a thin veneer," he said. "Beneath the veneer is a savage who will do whatever he had to do to survive."

His wife, Barbara, died of cancer in 1995 and his youngest son, Doug, had been killed several years earlier in a car crash. Mr Peterson rarely speaks of these personal traumas.

It is probably this instinct for survival which finally resulted in his appointment yesterday. Mr Peterson's nomination had been delayed for almost a year by opponents who saw a new diplomatic mission as no help to the United States in determining the fate of more than 2,000 American PoWs and those missing in action whose fate remains unknown.

Vietnam's Communist leaders have praised Mr Peterson's previous visits as a congressman for Florida and even veterans groups opposed to any normalisation of relations have admitted that he is a sound choice.

Raised in what he has described as Spartan conditions in Omaha, Mr Peterson is the ninth of ten children. His family moved to various parts of the Midwest while he was a teenager, before finally left Iowa Wesleyan College to join the Air Force.

Wherever he was stationed, Mr Peterson took classes for a degree which he finally gained from Tampa University in 1976 at the age of 41. After retiring from the Air Force as a colonel in 1980, he settled in Florida and, a decade later, was recruited by the Democrats to run for Congress. He retired from the House of Representatives at the beginning of this year.



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THE TIMES SATURDAY MAY 10 1997

Spanish vultures get a taste for live farm animals

FROM GILES TREMELT IN MADRID

VULTURES in northern Spain have made a Darwinian leap in behaviour by shunning their traditional fare of carrion and evolving into vicious pack hunters of live animals.

The sudden change in behaviour of a group of Griffon vultures, *Gyps fulvus*, in the hill country of Navarre has caught scientists and local farmers by surprise.

Vultures are meant to be exclusively interested in dead and decaying meat. They are also famous cowards.

"I have never seen anything like it," Pedro Cahamares, a shepherd, told *La Vanguardia*.

"We always thought of the vultures as our friends, and I don't understand what is happening to these ones."

Government officials at first refused to believe farmers who complained that the birds had tired of picking clean the rotting carcasses of dead ani-



20 miles

mals and had started hunting down sheep, calves and foals. A vulture's sluggishness on the ground and its usually timid personality mean it is poorly adapted for hunting for its food.

However, a series of pictures captured by a freelance photographer finally proved that a group of young Griffon vultures had developed a method of surrounding sheep and using their sharp beaks and powerful neck muscles to peck them to death.

The investigators will try to determine whether the attacks really mark a change in behaviour in the species, or whether they are the work of a rogue gang of adolescent vultures who have developed a

bizarre taste for killing. The attacks, however, present a problem for the regional government.

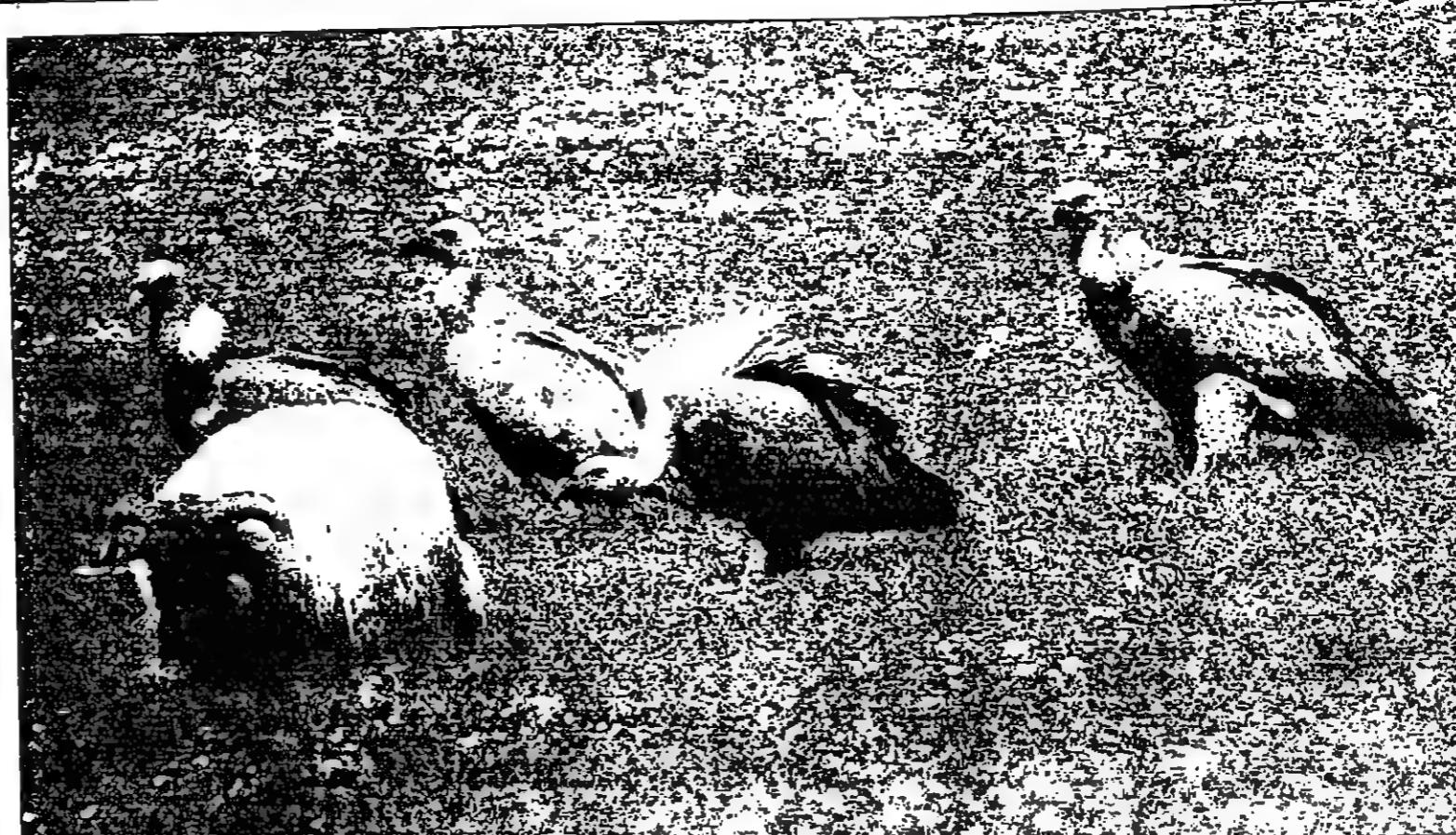
The Griffon vulture, one of just four species left that survive in Europe, is a protected animal in the country. A cull of the offending individuals would be against the law. Instead the authorities have ordered that some of the birds

be captured and kept at a wildlife centre "for study". Ornithologists have given a warning that farmers might begin to take their own revenge on the vultures by poisoning carcasses, a technique that has driven the birds from much of the rest of Europe.

"Spain is the one big success story for vultures," David

Houston, of Glasgow University, said.

"In other parts of the Mediterranean the birds are being poisoned on a massive scale," he added.



Where sheep may not safely graze: Griffon vultures have apparently switched from their traditional habit of eating carrion

Mobutu waits for more Gabon talks

BY OUR FOREIGN STAFF

PRESIDENT MOBUTU of Zaire was reported yesterday to have delayed his return home from Gabon, awaiting talks with Thabo Mbeki, the South African Vice-President, who said he had won promise from Laurent Kabila, the rebel leader, to give diplomacy a chance.

Mr Mobutu delayed his return to Kinshasa for the talks with Mr Mbeki, which will lay the groundwork for another face-to-face meeting between the President and Mr Kabila on a South African ship on Wednesday.

"Mr Kabila says he is committed to the peaceful resolution of the Zaire conflict," Mr Mbeki said in Lubumbashi, Zaire's second city, after talks with the rebel leader. "He is willing to give diplomacy a chance and our understanding is that he will not proceed with the military campaign until after next week's meeting," he added.

Earlier, as two more international airlines cancelled flights to Kinshasa, the rebels restated their demand that Mr Mobutu stand down and hand power to Mr Kabila. "We insist, as we have always insisted, that Mr Mobutu must resign and hand over power directly to 'President' Kabila," Bimba Karaha, the "Foreign Minister" of the Alliance of Democratic Forces for



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Republicans seek federal trials for teenage crime

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

REPUBLICANS sought to seize the initiative over juvenile crime in America yesterday, overwhelmingly endorsing a crime Bill that would allow offenders as young as 13 to be tried in federal courts.

The legislation, easily approved by the House of Representatives but still requiring the stamp of the Senate, would also offer block grants totalling \$1.5 billion (1925 million) to states that modify their laws along federal lines.

Few young offenders are tried in federal courts, however, so the vote to toughen federal penalties for violent crimes such as murder, rape and armed robbery is largely symbolic.

But if Congress can persuade the states to follow suit, the effects could be important. It would all but abolish the special treatment traditionally granted young people accused of serious crimes and could bring about the most sweeping changes in the juvenile criminal system in decades.

Not only does the Juvenile Crime Control Bill require minors who commit violent acts to be tried as adults, but also demands in some cases that, once convicted, they should share jails with older

felons. President Clinton, touring Latin America, denounced the Bill for its failure to balance tough enforcement with prevention and intervention.

Unlike his Youth Violence Act, the President said, the Republican legislation did nothing to combat gang violence or to bar the sale of guns to 18-year-olds with juvenile criminal records.

Democrats portrayed the opposition Bill as a vote-face in which the Republicans contradicted their deeply held philosophy of returning power to the states. But the stringent measures of the proposed law, which passed in the House by 286 to 132, clearly resonated among more conservative Democrats, 77 of whom supported the opposition agenda.

Although statistics show that nationally crime rates are dipping, including figures for juvenile offences, a fifth of violent crime in America is committed by people under 18. George Gekas, a Republican congressman from Pennsylvania, said: "Americans are shocked by the brutality and viciousness of crimes that are being committed by 13, 14 and 15-year-olds. And they are equally shocked when they see a system that treats these

juveniles as something less than the predators they seem to be."

The most recent figures show that only 200 defendants aged 18 or younger were tried on federal charges in 1994, but about 12,300 young people a year are prosecuted as adults in state courts. That figure would soar if the Bill were to become law.

States hoping to qualify for the block grant, designed to enable the employment of more prosecutors, the building of more jails and the creation of drug courts would have to meet four conditions.

They would have to ensure that juveniles of 15 or older were tried as adults, that draconian penalties were imposed on repeat offenders, that a tracking system was established for minors and that parents would face court orders if guilty of improper supervision of their children.

Defendants as young as 14 would be tried as adults and the legislation would allow state attorneys-general to move the trial of a 15-year-old to an adult court. About two thirds of the states would be forced to toughen their juvenile laws to become eligible for the grants.

Gingrich leads drug crusade

BY TOM RHODES



Gingrich: wants life in jail for drug traffickers

NEWT GINGRICH, the House Speaker, yesterday outlined a Republican blueprint for social reform, promising by 2001 to eradicate drug use, improve education and convince Americans their country was founded on faith.

In his first big policy speech of the current Congress, designed to bolster a previously precarious role as Speaker, Mr Gingrich said his team was ready for widespread change in American morality by the millennium.

The vision that there can be a secular polity divorced from the reality of the Creator is an empty desert of despair," Mr Gingrich told members of the

National Religious Broadcasters. "It is vital that we reassert the centrality of faith in the definition of America."

His proposals, which aides said last night would dominate the Speaker's personal agenda in the coming years, include at their heart a plan to banish illegal drugs from America.

Mr Gingrich and Trent Lott, the Senate majority leader, have co-sponsored a Bill that would impose mandatory life sentences for first-time offenders caught trafficking large quantities of drugs across the border. The death sentence would apply for a second offence.



Pamela Anderson Lee giving evidence in a Los Angeles court in a case in which she is accused of backing out of a film, leaving the producers high and dry

Actress 'broke film contract' over sex scene on pool table

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

PAMELA ANDERSON Lee, the former doyenne of *Baywatch* lifeguards, is accused in a Los Angeles court of backing out of a film role because it involved simulated sex on a pool table.

Ms Anderson Lee, who was never shy of nudity as the most popular "playmate" in *Playboy* magazine's history, agrees that she objected to the sexual content of a script entitled *Hello, She Lied*. She is being sued for \$5 million (£3 million) by producers who say she left them high and dry. The script, based on a

recent bestseller by the producer Lynda Obst, was offered to the Canadian actress but was eventually made as *Miami Hustler*, starring the swimsuit model Kathy Ireland. At issue is whether Ms Anderson Lee, 29, made a mere verbal agreement or signed a deal, on the strength of which the Private Movie Company claims it hired extras and security guards and agreed the details of her trailer. "I did not pull out," Ms Anderson Lee said in evidence on Thursday. She admitted under cross-examination having withdrawn in the past from a signed deal to make a *Playboy* video.

The actress dismayed fans last December by announcing that last year's *Baywatch* season had been her last. She planned to spend more time with her seven-month-old son, Brandon, and to "pursue other interests", she said. The news came a month after she sued for divorce from her husband, Tommy Lee, a rock drummer, only to be reconciled with him ten days later. The couple were married on a Mexican beach in 1993.

Taleban shelters Islamic 'terrorist'

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS
IN KANDAHAR

ONE of the world's most wanted terrorist suspects, Osama Bin Laden, has moved with his three wives to the southern Afghan city of Kandahar, headquarters of the Taleban Islamic militia.

He is living near the derelict airport, hidden from view because, even for Taleban, which claims to have ended his terrorist activities, he is an embarrassment. America has called him "one of the most significant sponsors of Islamic extremist activities in the world today".

He is wanted in Egypt for allegedly funding a plot to murder President Mubarak, and is a suspect in two bombings in Saudi Arabia last year in which 24 American soldiers died.

Born in Saudi Arabia, he was earlier living in the eastern Afghan city of Jalalabad, where he arrived a year ago with 150 men. He organised training for Islamic terrorists, mostly Sudanese and Saudis, in camps surrounding the city. He was allowed to remain after Taleban captured Jalalabad from the former Government last year, and continued to maintain contacts with the outside world by personal satellite telephone.

He has private wealth of more than £100 million, inherited from his father's construction business, and may have given financial help to Taleban. This would paradoxically put him on the same side as the Saudi Government, his nemesis and which he regards as corrupt.

Mullah Mohammad Hassan, 40, Governor of Kandahar Province and a senior Taleban leader — he may de facto be the second-in-command — said Mr Bin Laden was shifted to Kandahar a month ago. He insisted that giving him protection did not violate international law because he would be killed if he were sent out of the country.

"He is a human-being, and we have to rescue him. We also watched him closely in Jalalabad after we captured the city."

Mullah Hassan claimed that Mr Bin Laden had been instructed by Taleban to stop all foreign activities.

Body part suspect released

Mois: The lone suspect in the hunt for a Belgian serial killer, who left the body parts of many as five women in 15 rubbish bags, was released yesterday. Body parts were found in locations with macabre names, such as Anticet Lane and River Hate, but none was found since his arrest two weeks ago. (AP)

Crash toll up

Beijing: The death toll in China's first aviation disaster in three years, when a Boeing 737 slammed into the runway in the city of Shenzhen, rose to 35. (Reuters)

Children raped

Nevers, France: Jacky Kaisermetz, 58, a retired teacher, has admitted raping dozens of children over 30 years, police said. He was arrested after a victim left a message. (AP)

On the fiddle

New York: A concert violinist who smuggled rare violins into America was fined and ordered to perform at naturalisation ceremonies welcoming new citizens to the country. (AP)

Lorry tragedy

Delhi: A lorry carrying 90 guests to a wedding party fell into a gorge in northern India killing at least 71 people, many of them children, and injuring eight others. (Reuters)

Wiesel 'no'

New York: Elie Wiesel, the Nobel Peace Prize winner, said that he had declined the post of international chairman of a Swiss bank-backed fund for Holocaust victims. (AP)

Old flame

Ankara: A Turkish man, 55, has been charged with arson after setting fire to the home of his wife's lover, who gets the wife. The wife, 60, and lover were charged with adultery. (AP)

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†Rate effective from £1,000 from 1st May rate effective from £500. ††Rate effective from £200,000.

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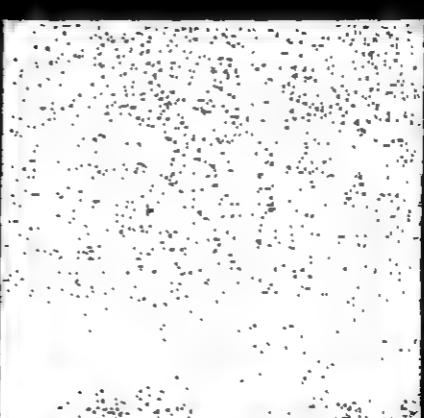
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FEATURE

Women How to survive mid-life crisis

**OPINION**

Paul Newman takes on the Republican right are there lessons here for us?

**THEATRE 1**

Alex Jennings's fine performance in the title-role cannot disguise the absurdity of the RSC's new *Hamlet*

**THEATRE 2**

Gabriel, at the Soho Theatre, is an absorbing tale set in occupied Guernsey

**MUSIC**

Heinrich Schiff steers period instruments rather cautiously through the *Missa Solemnis*

Perhaps my frosty heart has been thawed by the rosy dawn of New Labour. Perhaps I am relieved that the terrible prospect of Dr Jack Cunningham becoming the unipenned artless codger in a row to be made. Heritage Secretary has been replaced by the more congenial reality of nice Chris Smith — who has at least been inside a theatre or two, maybe even recently.

Perhaps I am just going soft. But I find myself strangely intrigued by one of Labour's arts policies. Unfortunately, it's the one that isn't going to happen for four years. I refer to the proposed National Endowment for Science and the Arts that will fund the performers, writers and (presumably) nuclear physicists of the future by tapping the royalties and goodwill of present-day celebrities. It won't happen for ages because Labour has said that it can't start until the lottery has paid for our millennium junketings. Of course, the new Government may yet junk the junketings, so perhaps we shall get our national arts endowment

earlier. Either way, it's a fascinating idea.

Will Lord X, composer of much-loved musicals, turn over his royalties from his mega-hit *Bats*, to subsidise a young songwriter who may one day write his audience from him? I merely ask the question. Will Clarence Berk, eminent Booker-winning novelist, cheerfully postpone the refurbishment of his proboscis so that a chunk of his bust million-pound advance can fund the rise of Jimmy Gob, the new foul-peppered literary sensation from the Gorbls? You have to wonder.

Oddly enough, this very subject has sparked off a wonderful scrap in America right now between the American politician Newt Gingrich and Paul Newman — actor, liberal and No. 1 dreamboat for ladies who blue-inse. What's happened in this? The National Endowment for the Arts — roughly

America's equivalent of our Arts Council — has been a target of right-wing wrath for years. It only receives \$99 million each year, but even that is begrimed by Republicans of the Jesse Helms persuasion. After accusing the NEA of supporting all sorts of gross moral turpitudes, from ferret-rusting to scribbling in library books, these politicians have now vowed to destroy it completely. "The Government should stay out of arts and ideas," announced one right-wing "think-tank" last month.

Well, the Clinton Administration, while perfectly happy to steer clear of ideas, is reluctant to renounce all claims to culture. So leading Democrats, along with lots of cultured celebs, have lately been fighting back. They point out that when a Hollywood studio will spend anything up to \$200 million on a movie, an annual outlay of \$99 million is not a lot for the

American Endowment for the Arts," he fumed, "they would fund a bigger system than the National Endowment for the Arts."

Hearing this, Paul Newman has reached for his gun. Or rather since he's now a bit wrinkly for Westerns his magazine. He is co-publisher of *The Nation*, and this month he pens an editorial pourng scorn on Gingrich's notion, to say nothing of his maths: "This handful of celebrities would need an annual gross income of \$10 billion to fund the endowment at its current level," Newman argues.

Of course we must be wary about making comparisons between Gingrich's crude rhetorical invective and Labour's rather idealistic endowment plan in Britain. We spend far more public money on the arts than America does. And there are far fewer culture-millionaires here than in America, or even in California.

Even so, there are intriguing parallels. Some British cultural figures are already generous arts patrons. Cameron Mackintosh has made an admirable offer of "matching funds" for cash-strapped applicants to the Arts for Everyone scheme. Paul McCartney sank millions into his Liverpool pool Institute for the Performing Arts, and persuaded many of his chums, from the Queen downwards, to do the same.

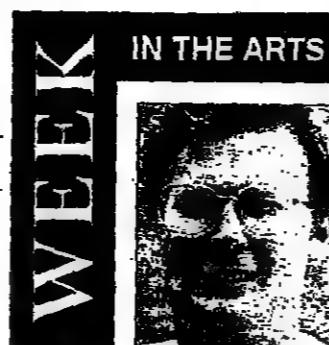
Alan Ayckbourn has spent half a million quid propping up his Scarborough theatre. And many composers and artists set up trusts to disburse their royalties to deserving young talents after they die. If the Labour Party thinks that it can persuade, bully or compel a lot of other luvvies to think philanthropic, good luck to it. A new Government has gotta dream.

boy, it goes with the territory. But more realistic is an idea which Labour's pre-election policy document groped towards without quite articulating. Taken as a whole, Britain's entertainment and tourism industry is highly profitable. So why not create a climate — moral, fiscal, whatever — that makes it advantageous for monster-hit record labels to help support excellent but impetuous classical orchestras, or television companies to subsidise the regional theatres that nurture the talent they need for their soap-operas?

It's already happening a bit: the record industry backs the Brits performing-arts school; and Carlton TV was a generous sponsor of Sam Mendes' Donmar Warehouse. It could happen much more. Why shouldn't airlines and hotel chains, for instance, support the theatrical and musical life that brings them so much tourist trade?

This sort of self-help, of course, is a very Old Tory idea. So clearly it should appeal to New Labour. I look forward to hearing nice Chris Smith's proposals any day now.

Will our celebs open their wallets?

**IN THE ARTS**

RICHARD MORRISON
greatest nation on earth to devote to arts subsidy.

This pact of lefties and luvvies has turned Gingrich an ugly shade of purple. "If the rich and famous people who lobby us would dedicate 1 per cent of their income to an

American Endowment for the Arts," he fumed, "they would fund a bigger system than the National Endowment for the Arts."

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Madness in this method

Did you know they cremated their monarchs in dear old Denmark? At any rate, that is what one must conclude from the opening image of Matthew Warchus's production of *Hamlet*. No Barnardo, no Marcellus, no ramparts, no midnight no ghost. Just Alex Jennings's Prince in a black suit, emptying what are presumably the ashes of his father on to the ground while photos of his younger self cavorting with a dog and his parents flash across the wall behind him.

By the time the action abruptly ends to a palace party, with Claudius and Gertrude dancing to rock music amid the balloons and champagne, one knows that this will be an unconventional revival and can only hope that it will also be fresh and lively. Thanks to Jennings's fine *Hamlet*, it is sometimes that. More often, though, it leaves one boggling at the cheek of a director who seems to think he is parading up a film script for Hollywood, not staging Shakespeare in his home town.

There is every reason to resist bland reverence for *Hamlet*, and some justification for chopping it. But several of Warchus's cuts remove as much sap as bark. After all, what is the effect of removing the entire opening scene, and asking Edward Petherbridge's ghost to enter Claudius's party in a green-lit smoking jacket and lure his son to a truncated encounter in some stately hall? To destroy the feel, vital to the play, that order has been horribly affronted, not just in the family, not just in Denmark, but in the cosmos itself.

But Warchus is not interested in matters metaphysical or even political. Fortinbras and the threat of war disappear thus illuminating.

Hamlet
RST, Stratford

With Horatio bidding goodnight to his sweet prince and begetting flights of angels to sing him to his rest, while photos of the boy Hamlet playing with his daddy reappear in close-up behind the assembled corpses, it is as if Shakespeare's most complex tragedy were a sentimental American father-son drama, and easelore a rather large back porch.

Don't expect to hear "that this too too solid flesh would melt" or "bid the soldiers shoot" or many a famous and important line in between. Warchus injects a spurious episode in which Derbyshire's Ophelia sends Hamlet back his letters and shirt open, he bangs despairingly at her door, and another in which Diana Quick's Gertrude, having been read Hamlet's account of his adventures at sea, tells Horatio to "commend a mother's care to him". Yet poor Jennings does not even get the chance to deliver the great soliloquy that begins

"how all occasions do inform against me".

But he still contrives to give us a grave, wary prince who loses a frightening amount of self-control when more than intellectual passion is demanded of him. The "to be" speech comes across with force and clarity, although I don't see why it has to be displaced, or why Jennings needs to point a pistol at his head while he speaks it. His ability to combine intelligence and feeling, irony and rage, leaves one wishing he had a director who trusted Shakespeare more.

With such a director, Quick's sweet Gertrude, Paul Freeman's smooth Claudius and Crotty's Ophelia, pathetically tattered up in flaming leoticks and high heels, might have achieved deeper anguish in extremis. But the main victim is David Ryall's Polonius, who is denoted by the programme from chief minister to "old family friend" and loses every line that suggests he is anything but a kindly codger comically puzzled by Hamlet's antics. Is that why the role has attracted a thousand good actors? No, no, no.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE



Alex Jennings, a fine Hamlet in a poor production, ponders fate with an old friend

Scaling the choral heights

FESTIVAL REPORT
Heinrich Schiff

Heinrich Schiff

He had a notably fine response from the Brighton Festival Chorus who impressed by their firmness of tone and vigour of spirit. Once past an opening Kyrie that came out more like 'Cheerie' the singers became readily responsive to Beethoven's sometimes extreme demands of register and sustained phrasing.

The chorus at times obliterated the period instruments of the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, especially the often wan strings in places like the opening of the *Gloria*. And the silvery violin solo of the leader, Elizabeth Wallfisch, in the serene *Benedictus* was apt to come and go like moon-

shine peeping through clouds. Some of the brightest singing was to be heard in the latter part of the *Credo*. The four soloists worked well together on a foundation of Stephen Gadd's sometimes growly bass, with James Oxley, a tenor of clear articulation, Catherine Wyn-Rogers, a velvety alto, and Judith Howarth's soprano soaring brightly above them.

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Blair should be glad he is no President

The White House proposes, Downing Street disposes, says Bronwen Maddox

In public, the White House has pronounced itself neutral on Tony Blair's resounding victory, taking care to praise John Major's achievements; in private, the Administration is delighted. When President Clinton called to congratulate Mr Blair, he told him that they shared a "common agenda of purpose". In that, Mr Clinton echoed most of the American media, which has portrayed power, Mr Blair has surrendered control of monetary policy to an throughout as a reflection of Bill.

But the first ten days of the Labour Government have confirmed what was already obvious: Tony Blair is not Bill Clinton. He is more radical, he is more left-wing, and he has incomparably more power than an American President can put his ideas into action.

Ironically, some of Mr Blair's most inspiring proposals are profoundly American in their spirit of checking the power of government. The question now is whether Labour will carry through those constitutional reforms, or whether the temptations of retaining the full powers of Downing Street will prove irresistible.

In American coverage of the British elections, the cliché that Blair-is-Clinton was relentless. In part, no doubt, that arises from the task of translating the politics of a far-off country into the language of the American heartland. But many US writers also projected their growing disenchantment with their President onto Mr Blair.

Maureen Dowd, the *New York Times* columnist, pronounced Mr Blair "cloned from a clone" while *The New Yorker's* Joe Klein credited him with "magisterial vacuity".

That portrayal ignores the profound differences between the two men and the two offices. For a start, Mr Blair achieved a radical transformation of his party, in nudging Democrats towards the centre, Mr Clinton did not.

It is heresy within new Labour to reveal old Labour instincts. By contrast, Vice-President Al Gore, nervous of securing the party's nomination in 2000, is playing to both old and new Democratic galleries. Tellingly, before Mr Blair's reforms secured such a stunning endorsement, he was loathed by many in his own party, a tribute Mr Clinton has not enjoyed.

Despite Labour's transformation, Mr Blair remains more left-wing than any imaginable American president. He is committed to reducing income inequality; in America, equality of opportunity is all, and attempts to redistribute the proceeds are seen as an attack on individualism and enterprise.

But most importantly, the Blair-Clinton parallels ignore the differences between the White House and Downing Street. A British Prime Minister has power of which an American President checked and balanced by Congress, can only dream. With a majority of 179, Mr Blair seems omnipotent.

The only rational tactic of a modern American President is to promise all things to all people on the campaign trail — and to continue that ploy once elected, in the hope of coaxing policy through Congress. A speech condemning truancy may pass without opposition; anything more ambitious requires months of lobbying to build support. It may be Mr Clinton's nature to try to please all sides, but it is also the requirement of his office. In Britain, a coy silence on future policies proved a useful electoral ploy for Labour. But that is unnecessary in government. Given the decisions looming on Europe and Northern Ireland, for example, it is also scarcely possible.

It is particularly startling, then, that Mr Blair has chosen to use his

office to surrender powers of government beginning with the decision this week to give the Bank of England "operational" control over interest rates. To be sure, there is short-term expediency in the move given the rising trend of interest rates. But the breathtaking fact remains: within days of assuming power, Mr Blair has surrendered control of monetary policy to an

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Sensitive soul

LABOUR'S massed ranks are clearing their diaries for June 4 when Peter Mandelson, the new minister without portfolio, will be shown on BBC2 unburdening himself to the psychologist Oliver James. Mandelson, whose icy carapace loomed over the recent election campaign, has already

recalled the 20-minute interview in which he speaks emotionally of his childhood.

"We were flabbergasted that he agreed to the interview," says James, whose other interviewees in the series, called *The Chair*, are an eclectic bunch including the hypnotist Paul McKenna, the comedian Julian Clary and Patsy Palmer, in *EastEnders*.

Mandelson speaks of his earliest experience of Downing Street, when as a boy he ate smoked salmon and asparagus on the terrace of No 10 while watching the Trooping the Colour with his mother's father, Herbert Morrison, then a Labour Cabinet Minister.

He credits his mother with his early political education and says she was "softly spoken but with tremendous steel". Though fond of his father, he blames him and others of his generation for the rise of Militant.

"I genuinely think he is a misunderstood person," says James of Mandelson. "He comes

across as very human. Prick him and he bleeds."

• Extra bouquets for Susan Patterson, the American soprano playing Violetta in the English National Opera's revival of *La Traviata*. Last week, she twisted her ankle during rehearsals and even by the time of the dress rehearsal was still on crutches. Several ice-packs later,

she decided to brave it and performed at Thursday's opening night revealing her heavily bandaged right ankle only when bouncing off her deathbed in her nightie for the curtain call.

Word war

LUST and professional acrimony fill the pages of *Handsome Is: Adventures with Saul Bellow*, by the Nobel laureate's former agent Harriet Wasserman. The book, which is soon to be published in America, tells of an early nocturnal encounter between Wasserman and her most famous client.

When they first met, the pair spent a night together during which, according to Wasserman, she kept asking permission to touch the author "as if he were a museum object d'art". The whole night was a "comic nightmare". Wasserman viewed a shared secret between Bellow, who said "he hadn't had a date like that since under the Coney Island boardwalk when he was in high school."

Wasserman subsequently lost Bellow to Martin Amis's agent, Andrew "The Jackal" Wylie.

I think one knows all about girl power already



Wasserman tells of how, when asked by Wylie's lawyer to meet her rival, she replied: "I would rather meet you at the 42nd Street and 8th Avenue subway and clean the men's room toilet bowl with my tongue". No resentment then.

Here to help

THERE is a much of the Sweeney about the latest venture of Sir Peter Imbert, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police from 1967-93. He has set up a security company called Capital Eye, slogan "Keeping an eye out for you". Imbert advocates a "more holistic approach" to security and promises advice on

hostage situations among others. Then, in his best crime-fighter manner, he declares: "The challenge criminals pose to business, crisis planning and strategy are numerous — and we can help." Cue grainy freeze-frames and shots of whizzing Cortinas.

• History at least is on the side of Michael Howard in his campaign for the Tory leadership. His HQ is in Jonathan Aitken's house at No. 8 Lord North Street. One of the few London houses to contain a bathroom, it used to belong to Brendan Bracken, Churchill's close friend, and was where the anti-apartheid plotter plotted Chamberlain's fall and Churchill's ascent at the beginning of the Second World War.

True Blue

TONY BANKS, the new Minister for Sport, has chosen not to sit in the Royal Box on FA Cup day so that he can be down in the stands with his fellow Chelsea supporters. "I don't think Her Majesty would appreciate it if I start shouting with my hands in the air when Chelsea

scores," says Banks, a staunch republican, who insists he has paid for his ticket.

And what of other prominent Chelsea supporters from the House? "I understand John Major is not going," said Banks. "He thinks he's a bit of a jinx. But with the luck he's had lately his jinx might have lifted."

P.H.S.

Human: Mandelson

recorded the 20-minute interview in which he speaks emotionally of his childhood.

"We were flabbergasted that he agreed to the interview," says James, whose other interviewees in the series, called *The Chair*, are an eclectic bunch including the hypnotist Paul McKenna, the comedian Julian Clary and Patsy Palmer, in *EastEnders*.

Mandelson speaks of his earliest experience of Downing Street, when as a boy he ate smoked salmon and asparagus on the terrace of No 10 while watching the Trooping the Colour with his mother's father, Herbert Morrison, then a Labour Cabinet Minister.

He credits his mother with his early political education and says she was "softly spoken but with tremendous steel". Though fond of his father, he blames him and others of his generation for the rise of Militant.

"I genuinely think he is a misunderstood person," says James of Mandelson. "He comes

across as very human. Prick him and he bleeds."

• Extra bouquets for Susan Patterson, the American soprano playing Violetta in the English National Opera's revival of *La Traviata*. Last week, she twisted her ankle during rehearsals and even by the time of the dress rehearsal was still on crutches. Several ice-packs later,

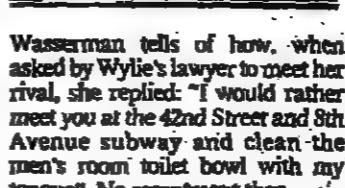
she decided to brave it and performed at Thursday's opening night revealing her heavily bandaged right ankle only when bouncing off her deathbed in her nightie for the curtain call.

Word war

LUST and professional acrimony fill the pages of *Handsome Is: Adventures with Saul Bellow*, by the Nobel laureate's former agent Harriet Wasserman. The book, which is soon to be published in America, tells of an early nocturnal encounter between Wasserman and her most famous client.

When they first met, the pair spent a night together during which, according to Wasserman, she kept asking permission to touch the author "as if he were a museum object d'art". The whole night was a "comic nightmare". Wasserman viewed a shared secret between Bellow, who said "he hadn't had a date like that since under the Coney Island boardwalk when he was in high school."

Wasserman subsequently lost Bellow to Martin Amis's agent, Andrew "The Jackal" Wylie.



Wasserman tells of how, when asked by Wylie's lawyer to meet her rival, she replied: "I would rather meet you at the 42nd Street and 8th Avenue subway and clean the men's room toilet bowl with my tongue". No resentment then.

Here to help

THERE is a much of the Sweeney about the latest venture of Sir Peter Imbert, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police from 1967-93. He has set up a security company called Capital Eye, slogan "Keeping an eye out for you". Imbert advocates a "more holistic approach" to security and promises advice on

hostage situations among others. Then, in his best crime-fighter manner, he declares: "The challenge criminals pose to business, crisis planning and strategy are numerous — and we can help." Cue grainy freeze-frames and shots of whizzing Cortinas.

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P.H.S.



TRUST THE PEOPLE

For the Tories, democracy is too precious to be rationed

Tories have too often seen expanding the electorate as a "leap in the dark". Their fears have proved phantoms. Mass democracy has, far more often than not, returned Conservatives to power. After last week's drubbing at the polls, the Tories may be tempted to echo the Iron Duke and "damn democracy", but it is by extending their own franchise that the party can best recover.

The Tory party needs to choose a new leader quickly to oppose a Prime Minister who is already exploiting the vacuum to make the whole job of opposition more difficult. The House of Commons has had its dignities infringed by Mr Blair's announcement of the changes he wishes to institute to Prime Minister's Question Time. The Commons needs a defender, quickly, and so do the shattered Tory ranks within the House. It is not, however, only Tory MPs who must be rallied by a new leader; so must those Tory supporters and potential sympathisers in the many areas of the country where there are no Conservative MPs.

As our report and survey, on the front page indicate, there is a growing appetite among activists for a say in the choice of the next leader. It is very far from an idle aspiration. Robin Hodgson, the chairman of the National Union of Conservative Associations, believes that even within the tight timetable likely for the leadership election it is possible to canvass grass-roots opinion convincingly.

The manner of the next leader's election is a matter for the 1922 Committee. Mr Hodgson believes that the next 1922 chairman should construct an electoral college for the next leader with 20 per cent of the votes reserved for party volunteers. The proportion may not be ideal, but the principle is impeccable. The party's workers deserve the right to participate in the choice of their new leader. If Tory MPs wish to deny their activi-

sts the vote in one election, then the activists may ask why the MPs deserve their vote in others. Those inclined to caution can, rightly, point out that the leader of the Tory party should be able to command the support of a majority of his fellow MPs. It is, however, very hard to conceive of a Tory leader, chosen by the volunteers who select MPs, who would be unacceptable to those MPs.

The scale of defeat makes the need for reform more urgent. If the Tories are to win back seats in Scotland, Wales, the cities and the suburbs then the voice of Conservatives in those constituencies must be heard. The parliamentary Tory party has been flattered by the "world's most sophisticated" electorate. Outside the Vatican, it is certainly one of the smallest. One hundred and sixty-four predominantly county members makes, in every sense, an insufficiently broad electoral base for the party of One Nation.

It is no longer acceptable for the tribal customs of Fifies England to govern the operations of a party in Nineties Britain.

Beyond providing a social outlet for the retired and social-climbing facilities for the rest, the Tory party has proved increasingly incapable of attracting new members. People join political movements for idealistic reasons. Social factors play a part, but the primary purpose of political activity for most members is the desire, however modest, to change the world. If it is to survive and prosper, the Tory party must give its volunteers a say in the determination of leader and policy. Lord Randolph Churchill argued in 1883, "if you want to gain the confidence of the working classes, let them have a share, and a large share — a real share and not a sham share — in your party councils and in your party government". More than a century later, the hard-working classes who form the backbone of the Conservative Party deserve that share.

RICHES OR RUIN

In Venice, there is no margin for scientific error

Anchored by piles driven into mud, rock and salt water, Venice has to contend with a subtly treacherous natural aquatic environment made habitable only by accumulated experience, skilled engineering and increasing maintenance of its canals and surrounding lagoon. The city has braced itself down the centuries against the menace of the sea, which yet again this week submerged parts of Venice in four feet of brine. Venice can shrug off the occupation of St Mark's belltower by hoodwink separatists; the sea is an enemy that commands respect.

But Venice also has historically embraced the sea as opportunity and source of its once vast wealth — a pre-industrial synergy that has not translated well into this century. Until aqueducts compensated for the excessive extraction of groundwater to meet the needs of the neighbouring Marghera petrochemical complex, Venice subsided more than 20cm within a mere two decades. A deep channel dredged through the lagoon for oil tankers upset the tidal flows which irrigate the canals. In both cases, development had been judged risk-free; the ensuing near-fatal damage to Venice's fabric was arrested only after an international outcry and at enormous, continuing cost.

That is the background against which Agip, the Italian oil and gas company, is planning to drill for natural gas in the bed of the Adriatic just outside the Venetian lagoon. Agip claims that this huge investment, involving 15 seams and 19 rigs, would bring jobs and revenue to Venice, without causing further subsidence. The first part of this claim is true; related marine services could for example help to breathe new economic life into the magnificent Renaissance shipyards of the Arsenal. But Agip's assertion that no environmental risk is involved requires the most rigorous scientific scrutiny and an unequivocally positive verdict.

That may be beyond the reach of science. Subsidence occurs when gas or oil is extracted from a seam, creating a void. Whether subsidence is localised depends on whether the field drilled is connected by subterranean channels to other fields. Each site has a different geological profile; in the North Sea, "localised" settlement extends over nearly 60 miles. Venice is far closer than that to the Adriatic site. The precise extent of a field, or whether it is linked to others, cannot be determined with sufficient accuracy in advance; uncertainty can be reduced but not eliminated by trial drilling, trial pumping or geological surveys.

Agip contends that it can control subsidence by the injection of seawater into the seam as gas is extracted. This technology, it says, accelerates the natural seepage of seawater into the void created by extraction — a process that has not prevented subsidence in other fields. But injection is normally done only after extraction, by which time settlement has begun. Agip has further promised to install a "spy well" to monitor possible subsidence, and a protective barrier between the gas field and the coast. If the company's technology is foolproof, it is not clear why it needs these extra precautions or how they would help subsidence once begun is irreversible.

The decision lies not with Venice but with Edo Ronchi, the Italian Environment Minister, who this weekend receives an environmental impact report. He should also weigh the adverse findings by the Venice College of Engineers against Agip's proposals. To flourish, Venice must be not a theme park but a living city; provided it can be proved that its vulnerable fabric will be unaffected, Agip could be an ally in its economic regeneration. If such a guarantee is scientifically impossible, permission should be denied. In Venice, there is no margin for error.

NEW CENTURY, NEW OSCAR

Good can come out of gaol and even out of bad verse

A century ago Oscar Wilde was released from Reading Gaol. In our *Weekend* section Peter Ackroyd discusses the final three years of Wilde's life in exile and disgrace. Because it was Wilde who was dying, the years were not entirely sad. The man who joked when made to stand in the rain while waiting for the van to take him to prison, "if this is the way Queen Victoria treats her prisoners, she doesn't deserve to have any," was not one to wait in the anteroom of Père Lachaise cemetery without sparks.

So he made his deathbed witicism. Accepting a glass of champagne just before his death: "I am dying, as I have lived, beyond my means." Or commenting on the famous wallpaper in his seedy room in the Hotel d'Alsace: "My wallpaper and I are fighting a duel to the death. One or other of us has to go." And as they all knew, it was Oscar not the wallpaper that went.

In its attitudes to prison, capital punishment, homosexuality and witty intellectuals, Britain has grown up a little since then. *The Ballad of Reading Gaol*, which Wilde wrote in prison, helped to change those attitudes. It is one of those good bad poems, like *If*, which makes it into the anthologies and wins league tables of favourite poems. But if you parse what it says about the effects of quicklime, tents of blue that prisoners call the sky, and the unfortunate propensity of each man to kill the thing he loves, it is

sentimental, platitudinous or wrong. The direct language and bouncing rhymes of the ballad tradition make Wilde's prison lament easy to learn by heart and hideously impossible to forget thereafter.

Wilde was an aesthete who said that art was the only serious thing in the world, but that the artist was the only person who was never serious. He would have enjoyed the incongruity that the poem in which he abandoned flippancy and artifice had more effect than anything else he wrote. As a modernist at the tail-end of Victorian society, Wilde would have been new Labour. Joe Klein, the "anonymous" author of *Primary Colors*, wrote that the advantage of new Labour was that it gave one the opportunity to wear designer clothes without the need to feel guilty. Wilde got there a century before Klein in *The Soul of Man under Socialism*, when he said that Socialism removed the tedious necessity of worrying about other people.

Modern critics admire the intelligence of Wilde's social essays. And the master of paradox has now been granted his place in Poets' Corner. A century ago Wilde represented degeneracy and weakness for his contemporaries. But he was a brave man, who protested against the vulgarity of his age. And yet, artistically, he was himself subject to vulgarity of an opposite kind. Reading gaol was a disaster for Wilde. But his ballad about it has been a great success.

Free information pledge recalled

From the Director of the Campaign for Freedom of Information

Sir, Your leader, "The freedom files" (May 9), makes an excellent case for rapid legislation on freedom of information — which now looks set to be delayed by several years, by which time ministers may have learnt habits of secrecy that will be difficult to break.

But what a shame that the case for early action should even need to be made. For as long ago as January 1991, the then deputy Labour leader and Shadow Home Secretary, Roy Hattersley, announced that freedom of information "is not only suitable for early enactment. It is ready for early enactment. If it is a Labour government was elected... I would be able to send the headings of a Bill to parliament on the following day."

Yours sincerely,
MAURICE FRANKEL,
Director,
The Campaign for Freedom
of Information,
Suite 102,
16 Baldwins Gardens, EC1.
May 9.

Redundant MPs

From Mr D. R. Tudor

Sir, Mr Hugo Summerson and others (letter, May 6) are on a very weak platform when they argue that the new Parliament should "embrace the challenges of being a modern employer" so that MPs who lose their seats would receive the same consideration as most people who lose their jobs, e.g. statutory redundancy payment based on length of service, and help with career management.

The fact is that MPs refuse to be treated as employees and insist upon being classed as self-employed. They do so because it is to their considerable financial advantage. Despite this, they still receive most of the benefits of employed persons. What other self-employed person contributes so little towards his pension? What other self-employed person pays so little for his National Insurance stamp; is given an annual allowance towards his secretarial needs; or receives any compensation for the loss of employment?

Those 135 Members who have just lost their jobs knew exactly what the terms, conditions and status of their appointments were to be. Presumably, if they had not been satisfied with them they would not have fought tooth and nail to be elected.

Yours faithfully,
D. R. TUDOR,
23 Kennedy Road,
Shrewsbury, Shropshire.
May 6.

From Mr S. T. Dobbs

Sir, Mr Hugo Summerson is wrong to advocate statutory redundancy payments for MPs.

When standing for election, prospective candidates are knowingly freelance individuals tendering for a short-term contract of at most five years. They are eligible to put themselves forward for a further contract, but tendering is competitive, and they are liable to be sacked from office if the general public deem that their performance has been unsatisfactory. This is not redundancy from a permanent position, and it is up to the MP to make arrangements for other employment if he or she is not re-elected.

There are many other government employees who live by short-term contracts and are a great deal worse off than MPs, having minimal employment rights, among them scientific researchers in universities.

This is the way "modern employers" operate. I am afraid, so why should MPs be made a special case?

Yours faithfully,
S. T. DOBBS
(Research biochemist,
Leicester University, 1988-92;
3 Warwick Close,
Market Harborough, Leicestershire.
May 6.

Where credit's due

From Mr Brian Kyle

Sir, It seems I wait in vain for the Prime Minister to thank Baroness Thatcher for reforming the Labour Party.

I remain, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
F. B. KYLE,
Clifton House, Great Clifton,
Workington, Cumbria.
May 9.

Out of the darkness

From Mr Charles E. Breton

Sir, Now that 18 years of Tory rule has ended, perhaps you should consider changing the announcement of the times of sunrise and sunset, currently the Hours of Darkness, to the Hours of Daylight, which has a more positive flavour.

Yours faithfully,
C. E. BRETON,
Vignes des Barreaux,
St Nazaire, 4410 Lauzun, France.
May 7.

Weekend Money letters, page 38

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

No limits to the future of science

From Mr Tore Boeckmann

Sir, In his review of John Horgan's book *The End of Science* (Mind and Matter, May 9), Nigel Hawkes observes that most great discoveries of modern science were made before the advent of state sponsorship, even though more scientists are now spending more money on research than ever. As a "plausible explanation" of this, he proposes the notion that there is nothing significant left to discover.

The true explanation, however, is contained in the problem. The breathtaking advances of modern science occurred at a time when scientific inquiry was free and independent. Progress slowed to a paltry trickle only when the State seized control of the funding of the field. Today, the scientist who rises to the top is not the one who excels in looking at reality with a fresh and objective glance, but the one most adept at reading the minds of bureaucrats and most pliable in bending to their wishes.

When science is released from the shackles of state control, it will once more shoot forward at unhampered speed.

Yours faithfully,
TORE BOECKMANN,
Torvgaten 1, 8005 Bodø, Norway.
May 9.

From Professor Emeritus S. John Pirt

Sir, The suggestion by Mr Horgan that scientific knowledge is reaching its limits is based on the narrow view that advances in cosmology and subatomic physics are the main criteria. This strikes me as arrogant and shows a reluctance to admit that the limelight has now focused on biological science.

From my half-century of experience in microbiological research, I am amazed by the magnitude of the advances in biology, particularly at the molecular level. These advances are opening up vast new frontiers for research. Also, unlike cosmology and the superstring theory, biological advances are having an immediate impact on our lives.

Scientific ignorance has recently precipitated a major political crisis, namely the failure to discover the cause of BSE disease in cattle. The theory ultimately validated will be revolutionary and will have immense implications for healthcare.

If we listen to the siren voices of those who say that the age of great scientific discoveries is over, then our politicians will probably tell us that we can cut back on scientific research. To do so would generate more political disasters, of BSE — or even greater — proportions.

Now we have relativity, superstrings — and quarks, which would seem to have an unanticipated inner structure.

Could it be that the laws of physics

Mental health law

From the National Director of Mind

Sir, The Americans are right to prevent employers from discriminating against people with psychiatric, as well as physical, disabilities ("Mentally ill in US get job protection", May 1).

Since December 1996 British employers with more than 20 staff have been under similar, if narrower, obligations (under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995). It is now illegal to refuse someone a job just because they have, or have had, a disability (physical or mental), and employers have to provide adjustments where necessary and reasonable. These include the mental health equivalents of wheelchair access, for instance, a quiet space to work or flexible hours. Both British and American law make it clear that such protection only applies if the person is qualified to do the job.

The British law unfairly excludes

many disabled people from its definitions, but it could begin to put a stop to some of the present waste of talents and lives. At least 85 per cent of British people of working age with significant mental health problems are out of work, though most could work if given the chance. Those who have fully recovered are routinely refused work.

We hope that a Government committed to opening up work opportunities will make a significant dent in the appalling unemployment rates for disabled people by strengthening disability discrimination law and providing help for disabled people with getting and keeping work. This must include those who are locked out of the workforce by the false view that people with mental health problems are incapable of working.

Yours faithfully,
JUDI CLEMENTS,
National Director,
Mind, 15-19 Broadway, E15.
May 6.

From Mr Roger Connell

Sir, Each day approximately 200,000 birds and just over one-third of a million small mammals die in the UK in the jaws and claws of cats, according to an article in the March issue of *BBC Wildlife* magazine. Their deaths will not be quick. By comparison, the killing of wildlife by human shooters and hunters, though deplorable, pales into insignificance.

Cat owners often express regret, but state that the carnage caused by their pets must be accepted as part of nature. This is clearly absurd. The cats are not part of the balance of the natural world in this country, and are not something with which the genuine wildlife should have to contend. They have been imposed on nature by human beings.

Yours sincerely,
ROGER CONNELL,
22 Pigeon Farm Road,
Stokenchurch, Buckinghamshire.
May 9.

'New' names

From Mr W. J. R. Gardner

Sir, Your report today, "Why it's Ace to call your son Gobnat", classifies some parents as illiterate for the use of certain given names for their children. I offer no comment on two of these, but have some difficulty with "Lyra" being put in this category.

Not only is this a small constellation lying near Cygnus and Draco which contains the star Vega, but it was also good enough to be used as the name of four British warships. I hope the descendants of the Board of Admiralty members who approved these namings can forgive such an implied calamity.

Yours sincerely,
JOCK GARDNER,
21 Milton Grove,
Locks Heath,
Southampton, Hampshire.
May 9.

David Helfgott

From Mrs Ann V. Schlachter

Sir, What a shame the critics slated David Helfgott (report, May 6; review, May 7). Why was it wrong to applaud between movements? He may not play the music perfectly but he plays it with total enthusiasm and because he loves and enjoys playing.

Mr Helfgott does not appear to me to be exploited because of his illness. People are going to his concerts because they admire him and love music. Shrine has done for Rachmaninov what Amadeus did for Mozart. They may not be conventional presentations of the composers' work, but they certainly bring it to the attention of people who would not normally be interested in classical music.

Yours faithfully,
ANN V. SCHLACHTER,
32 Kidbrooke Grove, SE3.
May 9.

First steps in the war on tobacco

From Sir Donald Acheson



COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
May 9: The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh arrived in Cogan Station this morning and were received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Mid Glamorgan (Captain Norman Lloyd Edwards RNVR).

The Prince of Wales, on behalf of The Queen, held an investiture at Buckingham Palace this morning.

The Queen, with His Royal Highness, The Duke of Gloucester, attended the Garden of Remembrance, Aberfan, and planted a commemorative tree.

The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh were received at the Garden by the Secretary of State for Wales (the Rt Hon Ron Davies, MP), the Chairman of the Aberfan Memorial Committee (Mr Cliff Minifie) and the Mayor of Merthyr Tydfil (Cllr Gwyneth Smith).

Her Majesty and His Royal Highness afterwards visited Hall Euro Enterprise Limited, Merthyr Tydfil, and were received by the Vice-Chairman (Mr K.H. Kang).

The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh toured the factory and watched a presentation of Korean and Welsh culture.

Later Her Majesty and His Royal Highness attended a luncheon at the Royal Mint, Llantrisant, and were received by the Deputy Master (Mr Roger Holmes) and the Mayor of Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council (Colonel Russell Roberts).

After luncheon The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh toured the Proof Coin Unit, where Her Majesty and His Royal Highness struck the first official wedding coin, and the Coin Press Room, where The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh watched the striking of the new £2 and 50p coins to be introduced later this year.

Her Majesty afterwards visited the Welsh Blood Service, Llantrisant, and was received by the Director (Dr Gail Williams).

His Royal Highness visited Lunwitz Major Surf Life Saving Manchester.

Royal engagements

TODAY: The Princess Royal, Patron, Gloucestershire and North Avon Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs, will attend the 60th anniversary of the Young Farmers' Clubs Show at the Equine Centre, Harbury College, near Gloucester, at 3pm.

TOMORROW: Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother will attend the Combined Cavalry Old Comrades' Association Parade and Service in Hyde Park at 11.05.

Royal Society of Portrait Painters

Prince Michael of Kent presented the Awards at the opening of the Annual Exhibition of the Royal Society of Portrait Painters held at the Mall Galleries on Wednesday. The Carroll Award for Young Portrait Painters and Silver Medal were won by Mr Francis Terry. The Ondante Prize for Portraiture and the Gold Medal were won by Mr Tom Winterton.

Service dinners

1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards

Major-General P.W. Ward, Colonel of the 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards, presided at the annual regimental dinner held last night at the Cavalry and Guards Club.

The Royal Artillery Regiment Col. R.C. Ross, Colonel of The Royal Artillery Regiment, presided at a Colonel-in-Chief's Dining Club dinner held last night in Ballymena.

The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers Colonel R.L. Currie, Deputy Colonel of the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers for Warwickshire, presided at a dinner held last night at the Council House, Birmingham.

The Middlesex Regiment (DCO) Major-General A.N. Carter was the principal guest at the annual Officers' Club dinner of the Middlesex Regiment (DCO) held last night at the Army & Navy Club, Brigadier B.A.M. Pellow presided.

2nd The Queen's Dragoon Guards

Major-General P.W. Ward, Colonel of the 2nd The Queen's Dragoon Guards, presided at the annual regimental dinner held last night at the Cavalry and Guards Club.

The Royal Artillery Regiment Col. R.C. Ross, Colonel of The Royal Artillery Regiment, presided at a Colonel-in-Chief's Dining Club dinner held last night in Ballymena.

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3rd The Queen's Dragoon Guards

Major-General P.W. Ward, Colonel of the 3rd The Queen's Dragoon Guards, presided at the annual regimental dinner held last night at the Cavalry and Guards Club.

The Royal Artillery Regiment Col. R.C. Ross, Colonel of The Royal Artillery Regiment, presided at a Colonel-in-Chief's Dining Club dinner held last night in Ballymena.

The Middlesex Regiment (DCO) Major-General A.N. Carter was the principal guest at the annual Officers' Club dinner of the Middlesex Regiment (DCO) held last night at the Army & Navy Club, Brigadier B.A.M. Pellow presided.

4th The Queen's Dragoon Guards

Major-General P.W. Ward, Colonel of the 4th The Queen's Dragoon Guards, presided at the annual regimental dinner held last night at the Cavalry and Guards Club.

The Royal Artillery Regiment Col. R.C. Ross, Colonel of The Royal Artillery Regiment, presided at a Colonel-in-Chief's Dining Club dinner held last night in Ballymena.

The Middlesex Regiment (DCO) Major-General A.N. Carter was the principal guest at the annual Officers' Club dinner of the Middlesex Regiment (DCO) held last night at the Army & Navy Club, Brigadier B.A.M. Pellow presided.

5th The Queen's Dragoon Guards

Major-General P.W. Ward, Colonel of the 5th The Queen's Dragoon Guards, presided at the annual regimental dinner held last night at the Cavalry and Guards Club.

The Royal Artillery Regiment Col. R.C. Ross, Colonel of The Royal Artillery Regiment, presided at a Colonel-in-Chief's Dining Club dinner held last night in Ballymena.

The Middlesex Regiment (DCO) Major-General A.N. Carter was the principal guest at the annual Officers' Club dinner of the Middlesex Regiment (DCO) held last night at the Army & Navy Club, Brigadier B.A.M. Pellow presided.

6th The Queen's Dragoon Guards

Major-General P.W. Ward, Colonel of the 6th The Queen's Dragoon Guards, presided at the annual regimental dinner held last night at the Cavalry and Guards Club.

The Royal Artillery Regiment Col. R.C. Ross, Colonel of The Royal Artillery Regiment, presided at a Colonel-in-Chief's Dining Club dinner held last night in Ballymena.

The Middlesex Regiment (DCO) Major-General A.N. Carter was the principal guest at the annual Officers' Club dinner of the Middlesex Regiment (DCO) held last night at the Army & Navy Club, Brigadier B.A.M. Pellow presided.

7th The Queen's Dragoon Guards

Major-General P.W. Ward, Colonel of the 7th The Queen's Dragoon Guards, presided at the annual regimental dinner held last night at the Cavalry and Guards Club.

The Royal Artillery Regiment Col. R.C. Ross, Colonel of The Royal Artillery Regiment, presided at a Colonel-in-Chief's Dining Club dinner held last night in Ballymena.

The Middlesex Regiment (DCO) Major-General A.N. Carter was the principal guest at the annual Officers' Club dinner of the Middlesex Regiment (DCO) held last night at the Army & Navy Club, Brigadier B.A.M. Pellow presided.

8th The Queen's Dragoon Guards

Major-General P.W. Ward, Colonel of the 8th The Queen's Dragoon Guards, presided at the annual regimental dinner held last night at the Cavalry and Guards Club.

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The Middlesex Regiment (DCO) Major-General A.N. Carter was the principal guest at the annual Officers' Club dinner of the Middlesex Regiment (DCO) held last night at the Army & Navy Club, Brigadier B.A.M. Pellow presided.

9th The Queen's Dragoon Guards

Major-General P.W. Ward, Colonel of the 9th The Queen's Dragoon Guards, presided at the annual regimental dinner held last night at the Cavalry and Guards Club.

The Royal Artillery Regiment Col. R.C. Ross, Colonel of The Royal Artillery Regiment, presided at a Colonel-in-Chief's Dining Club dinner held last night in Ballymena.

The Middlesex Regiment (DCO) Major-General A.N. Carter was the principal guest at the annual Officers' Club dinner of the Middlesex Regiment (DCO) held last night at the Army & Navy Club, Brigadier B.A.M. Pellow presided.

10th The Queen's Dragoon Guards

Major-General P.W. Ward, Colonel of the 10th The Queen's Dragoon Guards, presided at the annual regimental dinner held last night at the Cavalry and Guards Club.

The Royal Artillery Regiment Col. R.C. Ross, Colonel of The Royal Artillery Regiment, presided at a Colonel-in-Chief's Dining Club dinner held last night in Ballymena.

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12th The Queen's Dragoon Guards

Major-General P.W. Ward, Colonel of the 12th The Queen's Dragoon Guards, presided at the annual regimental dinner held last night at the Cavalry and Guards Club.

The Royal Artillery Regiment Col. R.C. Ross, Colonel of The Royal Artillery Regiment, presided at a Colonel-in-Chief's Dining Club dinner held last night in Ballymena.

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14th The Queen's Dragoon Guards

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15th The Queen's Dragoon Guards

Major-General P.W. Ward, Colonel of the 15th The Queen's Dragoon Guards, presided at the annual regimental dinner held last night at the Cavalry and Guards Club.

The Royal Artillery Regiment Col. R.C. Ross, Colonel of The Royal Artillery Regiment, presided at a Colonel-in-Chief's Dining Club dinner held last night in Ballymena.

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16th The Queen's Dragoon Guards

Major-General P.W. Ward, Colonel of the 16th The Queen's Dragoon Guards, presided at the annual regimental dinner held last night at the Cavalry and Guards Club.

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17th The Queen's Dragoon Guards

Major-General P.W. Ward, Colonel of the 17th The Queen's Dragoon Guards, presided at the annual regimental dinner held last night at the Cavalry and Guards Club.

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18th The Queen's Dragoon Guards

Major-General P.W. Ward, Colonel of the 18th The Queen's Dragoon Guards, presided at the annual regimental dinner held last night at the Cavalry and Guards Club.

The Royal Artillery Regiment Col. R.C. Ross, Colonel of The Royal Artillery Regiment, presided at a Colonel-in-Chief's Dining Club dinner held last night in Ballymena.

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19th The Queen's Dragoon Guards

Major-General P.W. Ward, Colonel of the 19th The Queen's Dragoon Guards, presided at the annual regimental dinner held last night at the Cavalry and Guards Club.

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20th The Queen's Dragoon Guards

Major-General P.W. Ward, Colonel of the 20th The Queen's Dragoon Guards, presided at the annual regimental dinner held last night at the Cavalry and Guards Club.

The Royal Artillery Regiment Col. R.C. Ross, Colonel of The Royal Artillery Regiment, presided at a Colonel-in-Chief's Dining Club dinner held last night in Ballymena.

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21st The Queen's Dragoon Guards

Major-General P.W. Ward, Colonel of the 21st The Queen's Dragoon Guards, presided at the annual regimental dinner held last night at the Cavalry and Guards Club.

The Royal Artillery Regiment Col. R.C. Ross, Colonel of The Royal Artillery Regiment, presided at a Colonel-in-Chief's Dining Club dinner held last night in Ballymena.

The Middlesex Regiment (DCO) Major-General A.N. Carter was the principal guest at the annual Officers' Club dinner of the Middlesex Regiment (DCO) held last night at the Army & Navy Club, Brigadier B.A.M. Pellow presided.

22nd The Queen's Dragoon Guards

Major-General P.W. Ward, Colonel of the 22nd The Queen's Dragoon Guards, presided at the annual regimental dinner held last night at the Cavalry and Guards Club.

The Royal Artillery Regiment Col. R.C. Ross, Colonel of The Royal Artillery Regiment, presided at a Colonel-in-Chief's Dining Club dinner held last night in Ballymena.

The Middlesex Regiment (DCO) Major-General A.N. Carter was the principal guest at the annual Officers' Club dinner of the Middlesex Regiment (DCO) held last night at the Army & Navy Club, Brigadier B.A.M. Pellow presided.

OBITUARIES

BRIAN WENHAM

Brian Wenham,
Managing Director BBC
Radio, 1985-87, and
Director of Programmes,
BBC TV, 1983-85, died
from a heart attack on
May 8 aged 66. He was
born on February 7, 1931.

Sometimes too sardonic for his own good, Brian Wenham was one of the ablest figures in British broadcasting. He is credited with transforming the fortunes of BBC2, of which he was controller from 1978 to 1982, by introducing snooker to the small screen, and in the 1970s and 1980s he was frequently spoken of as a future BBC Director-General. Had promotion within the BBC continued to move at its traditional measured pace, the job would almost certainly have been his. The governors' coup of January 1987 which dislodged Alasdair Milne from the D-G's chair also, however, adversely affected Wenham's own prospects.

Although he continued for a period to run what he persisted in calling "the wireless", the appointment of Michael Checkland as Milne's successor effectively put an end to his BBC ambitions. When Michael Grade was brought back from Hollywood to fill his own old job as director of programmes at Television Centre — with what seemed at the time to be the clear reversion to succeed Bill Cotton as managing director of BBC Television — Wenham recognised that the time had come to resign. He put in to become Jeremy Isaacs's successor at Channel Four in 1987, and hoped also to be appointed director of the British Film Institute in 1988.

But he was disappointed in both aspirations and the last decade of his life was spent largely as an adviser and consultant on broadcasting. He became a non-executive director of Carlton Television, which took over the London weekday franchise from Thames at the beginning of 1993, and — as one of the more intelligent and articulate spokesmen within the industry — was frequently to be seen and heard at media seminars and conferences. He was also a graceful writer and, as well



as editing, and writing a perspective essay in a book called *The Third Age of Broadcasting* (1982), for some time contributed a fortnightly broadcasting commentary to *The Times*.

Brian George Wenham came from no grand background and was educated at the Royal Masonic School, Bushey, and at St John's College, Oxford, where he took a brilliant first in Modern History. The first seven years of his television life were spent at ITN, where he worked for a period in the parliamentary lobby and was something of a protege of Alastair Burnet. At the same time he cut his teeth as a print journalist, serving as the London correspondent for the Washington weekly, *The New Republic*.

It was not until 1969, when he was already 32, that he was recruited by the BBC to become editor of what was then still very much its flagship current affairs programme, *Panorama*. Such talent-riding on the part of the corporation from ITV had not invariably worked well in the past but in Wenham's case it proved a triumphant success.

Within two years, at a time of some political turbulence, he was promoted to head of the BBC's TV's current affairs group, a post he was to hold during the reigns of both the Heath and the Wilson Governments for the next seven years. It was, as his predecessor had discovered, a difficult and exposed position, especially when it came to relations with the political parties, but Wenham handled it with great aplomb — no doubt partly because he was a highly political animal himself.

Milne had always been

Wenham's patron and champion and it was when he asked the highly successful controller of BBC2 to become his assistant director-general, with responsibility for all the corporation's journalism, that the fate of the BBC in the 1980s was effectively sealed. With uncharacteristic churlishness Wenham dug his toes in and refused to take the job. If he, with his highly developed political antennae, had been there to guard the D-G's back, it is perfectly possible that the various troubles that later developed could have been averted.

In the short term, however, it looked as if Wenham — from his own point of view — had made the right decision. The ill-fated move of Bill Cotton to take charge of the BBC's abortive venture into satellite broadcasting created a vacancy in the post of director of television programmes and the controller of BBC2 was chosen to fill it. This brought him, for the first time, a seat on the BBC's board of management and for a time all seemed set fair for his eventual succession to the BBC's top job.

If anything, his prospects were enhanced by a piece of special responsibility that he was again given by Milne. He was charged with orchestrating the BBC's response to the Peacock Committee on Financing the BBC that Margaret Thatcher had set up with a view — most commentators suspected — of getting the corporation in future to finance itself by advertising.

Not only was that danger avoided; the BBC came out with a remarkably clean bill of health — a marked contrast to its treatment at the hands of the Annan Committee of 1977. Within the corporation — and not least on the board of governors — a good deal of the credit for this was rightly accorded to Wenham, who had not only written all the BBC's submissions but had also organised a skilful press campaign designed to make the case against advertising.

But in his moment of triumph Wenham was nearer the end of his BBC career than he can have thought. The savage sacking of Alasdair

Milne in January 1987 meant that all bets were off terms of an ordered succession. Although Wenham might have been thought to be sitting pretty as managing director of BBC Radio, the appointment of Michael Checkland to succeed Milne had been followed by the bringing in from outside of an entirely new figure to serve as deputy Director-General and to take both managerial and editorial control of all the corporation's news and current affairs output.

From the moment that John Birt arrived in Broadcasting House an entirely new culture began to be created and Wenham was probably right to recognise that he was unlikely to have any rewarding or fulfilling place within it. At the age of 50 he resigned with dignity in the summer of 1987 — though there were to remain many who mourned the loss of his exceptional ability and talents in what was to prove a very rough period in the corporation's history.

Nothing became Wenham more than the fortitude with which he endured the disappointments of the last ten years of his life. He remained cheerful and never gave way to reprisal or recrimination. He was a man of many interests — a great lover of opera and the theatre and was beginning to develop a keen interest in painting. He was a director of Renaissance Films and of English Touring Opera, as well as playing a leading part in the affairs of the Institute of Contemporary Arts.

He possessed a host of friends — to most of whom he acted as the central point of contact in a group that in their twenties had been known irreverently as "the playmates". At the same time there was always a sense of detachment about him — perhaps the result of his knowledge that his father had died young of a heart attack and that this had very nearly been paralleled in his own case by his survival from one when he was merely in his mid-thirties.

His family life was always warm and close. He married in 1966 Elizabeth ("Liz") Woolley and she and their two daughters survive him.

ERIC OGDEN



Eric Ogden, Labour MP for Liverpool, West Derby, 1964-81, and Social Democratic Party MP for the same constituency, 1981-83, died from lung cancer on May 5 aged 73. He was born on August 23, 1923.

Trouble with his constituency first surfaced during the Common Market referendum in 1975. Ogden wanted Britain to remain in Europe while his management committee, undoubtedly Marxist-led, campaigned actively for withdrawal.

Relations never recovered after this and, although Ogden survived to hold his seat at the 1979 election, it was obvious that serious efforts were being made to get rid of him.

In June 1981, these succeeded when he was deselected and a left-wing candidate was chosen as his successor. Ogden appealed to his party's National Executive Committee and even threatened to precipitate a by-election. But by the autumn he had decided to leave Labour and join the SDP, claiming that Labour's policies had become completely different from those on which he had stood at the previous election.

He duly fought the 1983 election as an SDP candidate but was overwhelmed by the present West Derby MP, Robert Wareing. Ogden came in a bad third, with 7,849 votes behind the Conservative with 12,862 and Wareing who amassed 23,905.

Ogden made no attempt to re-enter the House. In political retirement he did some work as a consultant. As an enthusiastic philatelist, he became a member of the Royal Mail Stamps Advisory Committee.

His main interest, however, was foreign affairs; in this sphere he concentrated on the Falkland Islands and Yugoslavia. He had been with Shersby on a famous visit to the Falklands in 1981 and their work for the islands continued until their respective deaths. Ogden, in particular, harassed the Foreign Office to sustain support of the islanders' interests.

He also paid an annual visit to Yugoslavia, taking with him food and medical supplies until, in the wake of the country's break-up, the horrors perpetrated there succeeded in curbing even his admiration for the former socialist state's peoples.

He was twice married. By his first wife, now dead, he had one son. His second wife, Marjorie, survives him with their two sons and two stepdaughters by her previous marriage.

PRINCE NAPOLEON



Prince Napoleon with his wife and younger son Jérôme, Farnborough Abbey, 1973

Louis Bonaparte Prince Napoleón, died in Switzerland on May 3 aged 83. He was born in Brussels on January 23, 1914.

A PASSIONATE patriot and anti-Fascist, Louis Bonaparte fought for France with great bravery, although he was officially banned from entering the country throughout his early life.

The great-great nephew of Napoléon I, Louis Jérôme Victor Emmanuel Léopold Marie Bonaparte became head of the imperial house in 1926, after the death of his father, Prince Victor, the grandson of Napoléon's younger brother, Jérôme. His mother was Princess Clémentine, daughter of King Léopold II of Belgium.

From his birth, Louis Bonaparte was exiled from France under the 1830 law forbidding male descendants of former

ruling families from entering the country. He spent his early years in Belgium and Britain, where he lived as a boy in Farnborough with Empress Eugenie, widow of Emperor Napoléon III.

Prince Napoleon later settled in Switzerland, attending the universities of Lausanne and Louvain, where he studied political science and economics. In 1939 under the pseudonym Louis Blanchard and claiming Swiss nationality, he enlisted with the French Foreign Legion and saw action in North Africa.

Demobilised in 1941, Prince Napoleon returned to Switzerland and promptly contacted the French and Belgian Resistance movements. A year later, while attempting to cross the Pyrenees with three companions in a bid to join the Free French forces in Algeria, he was arrested by the occupying forces, handed over to the Gestapo and imprisoned for several months, first in the great fortress of Ha de Bordes, and later at Fresnes.

The intervention of the Italian royal family helped to secure his release and the imperial pretender, now using the alias Louis Monnier, immediately joined the ORA Resistance group operating in the Indre region of central France.

In August 1944, he was badly wounded during a fierce skirmish with the enemy, in which all six other members of his patrol were killed, including his cousin Prince Murat. In 1946 General de Gaulle, commanding Prince Napoléon

III, chose him to represent the French nation.

Prince Napoleon married Alix de Foresta, a Provincial aristocrat, in 1949. He is survived by her and by their two sons and two stepdaughters.

He was an active Member of the House, specialising in shipping, Commonwealth affairs and, of course, employ-

ment on Merseyside. In the last phase of the first Wilson Government he became parliamentary private secretary to his fellow-miner, Roy Mason (now Lord Mason of Barnsley) then President of the Board of Trade.

Trouble with his constituency first surfaced during the Common Market referendum in 1975. Ogden wanted Britain to remain in Europe while his management committee, undoubtedly Marxist-led, campaigned actively for withdrawal.

Relations never recovered after this and, although Ogden survived to hold his seat at the 1979 election, it was obvious that serious efforts were being made to get rid of him.

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CHARGE AGAINST A VICAR

On Friday Lord Penzance, official principal, sat in the Chancery Court, London, and heard the case of William Stobart v. Rev. Benjamin Centuri Reardon, Vicar of All Saints, Monkwearmouth. The counsel for the defendant was Mr. F. H. Jeune; the plaintiff was represented by Mr. P. H. Lewis.

Mr. Lewis said that the vicar had been suspended from his church for several subsequent occasions and that on the 10th of July he neglected to publish on the three Sundays next ensuing the banns of marriage between William Abbott and Ellen Seline Crump, the usual fees having been paid. It was set forth that by reason of this neglect there existed great scandal and evil report concerning him and that he had caused great scandal in the House of God. In the year 1874 the defendant was before the same Court for a similar offence, when, the charge being proved, he was suspended for three years, which suspension was ordered not to be relaxed until he was able to produce a certificate of good behaviour signed by three

ON THIS DAY

May 10, 1880

This clergyman "had caused great scandal in the House of God" by being drunk in the streets, failing to publish banns of marriage, and to perform divine service in his church. He was suspended more than once but the clerical authorities did not seem over-anxious to re-bid for good.

beneficed clergyman in the diocese of Durham, Mr. Jeune said the defendant was not reinstated until 1879 and within a few months he was guilty of the charges now brought against him. Mr. Jeune said that up to the present time the defendant's church had been almost entirely neglected and, excepting on one or two occasions when the defendant had no money to draw, he had not been near the church since the 10th of November last. He asked that the defendant might now be released from his suspension, as he was instructed by the Bishop of Durham not to press for total deprivation. Lord Penzance referred to

PERSONAL COLUMN

SERVICES

TICKETS FOR SALE

GIFTS

DOMESTIC & CATERING SITUATIONS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ANIMALS IN NEED

TRUSTEE ACTS

FLATSHARE

NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS

NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS

COURT & SOCIAL

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FOR SALE

GIFTS

NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS

NEWS

Local Tories demand vote

■ A growing rebellion by local Conservative associations over the conduct of the party's leadership contest is threatening to undermine the outcome, which will be decided by 164 MPs.

A Times survey of 80 constituency associations has found almost unanimous support for an urgent overhaul of the rules to give them a direct say in the choice of leader. William Hague, 36, the youngest contender, has emerged as the overwhelming favourite among the rank-and-file. Page 1

Question time cut attacked

■ Tony Blair was accused by Conservatives of rushing through arbitrary parliamentary reforms after he abolished the twice-weekly spectacle of Prime Minister's question time. Page 1

Spice Girls alone

The Spice Girls sang live before the Prince of Wales to show they can perform their complicated harmonies without the aid of backing tapes. Page 1

Summit 'progress'

Labour leaders hailed Britain's "fresh start" in Europe as Tony Blair claimed to have made substantial progress in preparing for the Amsterdam summit. Page 2

Moneypenny case

Two young men were acquitted of conspiracy to rob the woman who was the inspiration for Ian Fleming's Miss Moneypenny. Page 5

Aberfan memories

The Queen visited Aberfan and met survivors of the disaster of more than 30 years ago. Page 6

Sinn Fein plan

Sinn Fein is seeking to reap the rewards of election victory with its two new MPs exploiting its facility at the Commons. Page 8

Statesmenlike digestion

■ Chris Patten and Helmut Kohl, two of the mightiest eaters at the apex of world leadership, demolished one of the mightiest meals Hong Kong could provide. The colony's Governor and the German Chancellor forgot dull cares and wolfed down the 16-course "Guangdong Deluxe Dim Sum". Page 1

EastEnder praised

The descent into schizophrenia of the character Joe Wicks in *EastEnders* has prompted thousands of calls from sufferers. Page 13

Le Pen attacks

Jean-Marie Le Pen compared immigrants to a flock of ravenous birds who could be starved out rather than sent home. Page 14

Venice demonstration

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BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

SATURDAY MAY 10 1997

Patels put Cullens in their shopping basket



The Cullens name will survive after the £7.4 million deal in which Jitu Patel, above, and partners added the 121-year-old chain to their Europa Foods stores

Shares power to record as the pound slides

BY ALAN DAIR MURRAY

THE London stock market hit another record high yesterday as bumper trading in shares continued in the wake of Labour's landslide election victory.

Optimism about the interest rate outlook in Britain and America encouraged unusually heavy demand for financial shares, lifting the FT-SE 100 above 4,600 for the first time, with almost one billion shares traded. But the pound dropped sharply for the second day running as traders acted on a growing belief that the Government intends to bring sterling lower.

The FT-SE 100 closed up 50.5 at 4,630.9, after another 50-point rise on Wall Street overnight. The index has risen by a total of 4 per cent this week.

Traders said that a squeeze on shares in the banking sector had again led the market higher. Institutions have

been left underweight because of the imminent flotation of building societies such as the Halifax, Woolwich and Northern Rock which greatly increases the size of the quoted banking sector. But shares in the former mutuals will initially be concentrated in the hands of building society members, forcing the institutions to look to buy elsewhere in the sector.

Shares in Royal Bank of Scotland also benefited from takeover speculation, closing up 33p at 635.5p. Other major winners were NatWest, which rose 16.5p to 801.5p and Barclays, up 45.5p at 612.54p.

But analysts do not expect the latest rally in the market to continue as gains have been limited to a relatively small number of sectors. In contrast, the wider FT-SE 250 managed a rise of only 15.8 points to close at 4,526.2.

Shares in oil companies have risen sharply over the past week after a series of strong results in the UK and US. But sectors such as engineering have struggled owing to renewed fears over the impact of the high level of the

pound, while utility shares have sagged over continuing uncertainty surrounding the imposition of the windfall tax. There is also concern about possible corporation tax rises in Labour's mini-Budget.

The pound fell another two and half pence to close at DM2.7421, while sterling's trade weighted index lost nearly a point to close at 98.0.

The pound also lost a little ground against the dollar, falling from \$1.6205 to \$1.6193,

although the dollar itself remained under pressure from the mark and the yen.

The pound has slumped nearly 10 pence since hitting a post-ERM record on Tuesday amid enthusiasm for the Bank of England reforms announced by the Labour administration. Traders said rumours that Labour was considering re-entering the European exchange-rate

mechanism at DM2.50 were still being used as a selling point, although most analysts view re-entry as unlikely. The market has interpreted the speculation as a reminder that Labour would like to see sterling lower and could be preparing for tax rises to help take the strain off interest rates.

The pound has also suffered from the decline in the dollar which followed positive inflation comments overnight by Alan Greenspan, Chairman of the Federal Reserve Bank. He said interest rates would need to

rise if demand growth in the US did not slow but that conditions are different to 1994 when rates rose substantially.

This was taken as an indication that US rates are unlikely to

rise by more than a quarter point in the near future.

Stock market, page 30

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

CULLENS, the grocery chain founded 121 years ago, is to be taken over by three Asian businessmen who emigrated to Britain from East Africa less than 20 years ago.

Jitu Patel, who arrived from Zambia in 1978, and his partners, Narresh and Mahesh Patel, who are brothers and emigrated from Kenya 16 years ago, already own the London-based Europa Foods and Harts chains of convenience stores.

Yesterday their holding company, Administrators, made a £7.4 million recommended cash offer for Cullens. The chain, now comprised of only 21 stores, was once larger than J Sainsbury. After a century of growth, Cullens went into rapid decline in the 1970s due to the huge expansion of the big supermarkets and was transformed into a convenience chain in the 1980s.

Jitu Patel, an accountant in his mid-twenties, said that when he started out he intended to build up a chain of about 12 shops. He began with a newsagent in Burnt Oak, North London, and then started buying branches of Europa Foods in the early 1980s from the chain's founder, Albert Vine, eventually taking full control.

When Jitu Patel is not working, he spends much of his time in Neasden at the newly built Hindu temple, one of the largest in the world. His faith led to his success, he says. "This faith gives you immense energy and courage from within to go ahead," he said last year.

Turnover at Administrators, which controls 39 Europa and Harts stores, was £63.6 million last year. In contrast, Cullens turned over £6.1 million. The offer values Cullens at 28p a share. Administrators will borrow £4.5 million from Barclays to help to finance the deal.

A spokesman for Europa Foods said that Cullens stores would retain their name and identity. There were no plans to take a stock market listing for the enlarged group.

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BUSINESS TODAY

Betty Maxwell in pension challenge

BY JASON NISSE

KEVIN MAXWELL is to press the trustees of the Mirror Group pension scheme later this month to pay the £311,000-a-year pension that his mother, Betty, claims is owed to her by the fund.

Last year, Mr Maxwell was cleared of charges relating to the disappearance of £450 million from the pension funds of the former Maxwell empire. After Mr Maxwell's acquisition, Philip Sheridan, chairman of the Mirror trustees, wrote to him asking for assistance in locating up to £20 million that the fund has still not been able to uncover, despite strenuous investigations since Robert Maxwell's death in 1990.

Mr Maxwell replied, saying that he was willing to meet with the trustees, but wanted to raise the issue of his mother's pension fund at the meeting. The 14-strong board of trustees, which includes Charles Wilson, managing director of Mirror Group, have now agreed and a meeting is set for the end of this month.

Mrs Maxwell has claimed a pension of £311,000 a year



Amstrad wins £57m damages

BY JASON NISSE

A £57.5 million High Court victory for Amstrad, the electronics group run by Alan Sugar, is set to pave the way for a £250 million cash handout to the group's shareholders.

Mr Sugar, who is also chairman of Tottenham Hotspur, the Premiership football club, will receive more than £50 million in cash.

Amstrad was awarded the damages after a five-year legal battle with Seagate, the US computer component maker.

Amstrad said it had delivered faulty disk drives for Amstrad's PC2386 personal computers.

The poor quality of the PC2386 and its sister computer, the PC2286, ruined Amstrad's reputation in the early 1990s.

Judge Humphrey Lloyd QC, the official referee, ruled that the disk drives made by Seagate had been faulty and awarded damages to Amstrad under the Sale of Goods Act.

Seagate said it would seek leave to appeal, though Nick Gardner of Herbert Smith, Amstrad's solicitor, said it was difficult to appeal against rulings by the official referee.

Mr Sugar said: "Nobody will

ever know where Amstrad would be today if this had not happened. The great efforts of myself and my small team were demolished. The financial award we have received today only goes some way to compensate us."

Amstrad has another action against a disk drive maker, Western Digital, due to start in California in September.

Western supplied components for the PC2386 that are alleged to have been faulty.

Amstrad has more than £200 million of cash on its balance sheet and has been under pressure to distribute this to shareholders. Mr Sugar said he would seek a tax-efficient way of distributing the cash once the company knew the result of the Seagate action.

Amstrad had good news earlier this week too when it was awarded a contract to build digital set-top decoders for British Interactive Broadcasting, the consortium set up by BT, Midland Bank, Matsushita and BSkyB, which is 40 per cent owned by News International, owner of *The Times*.

Mr Sugar said: "Nobody will

AMP sights on Norwich Union

BY MARIANNE CURPHY
INSURANCE CORRESPONDENT

AMP is preparing an audacious takeover bid for Norwich Union shortly after the UK life company completes its £5 billion stock market flotation next month.

The Australian mutual, which already owns Pearl Assurance in the UK, is working with Morgan Stanley, the merchant bank. Yesterday Morgan Stanley declined to comment but AMP confirmed it had drawn up a 'shortlist' of acquisition targets in the UK.

Based on the upper end of the flotation

price range of 265p, a dawn raid with a bid premium of 25 per cent could give shareholders at least an extra 70p on each share they own. With the average policyholder in line for an £800 windfall, this could mean an extra £200.

AMP was thwarted in its bid for Scottish Amicable, the mutual insurer, which eventually agreed a deal with Prudential Corporation in March.

An industry source said: "AMP learnt a hard lesson when it failed to bag Scottish Amicable. One of the reasons it was beaten by Prudential was because Prudential could offer a much bigger

bonus to policyholders. By waiting until

after the flotation AMP will not have to bother with the complication of working out bonuses, as NU members will already have their shares. Instead, it can offer a simple premium of 25 per cent or more. It is a perfect fit, and AMP can sort out NU's Australian business."

AMP is keen to complete the acquisition before its own demutualisation next year, and would need Department of Trade and Industry approval and possibly that of an independent actuary.

To sell or not, page 34

Ireland is one of the fastest growing economies in Europe. More and more international companies are choosing the Emerald Isle as their 'gateway' into European markets.

Always highly regarded for its skilled, well-educated workforce, Ireland is now enjoying the benefits of sustained inward investment. It's the type of development that Martin Currie always monitor very closely as they seek out investment opportunities. Whether near to home or on the other side of the world.

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TT 24

Stake sale takes C&W closer to Beijing deal

By ERIC REGULY

CHINA EVERBRIGHT'S purchase of a 7.7 per cent stake in Hongkong Telecom, Cable and Wireless' largest business, was seen yesterday as the first step in C&W reducing its stake in the company before the colony's handover to China. China Everbright is an investment holding company controlled by the Chinese State Council, a powerful body at the centre of the Beijing power structure. It bought the stake, worth HK\$1.4 billion (about £912 million), from Citic Pacific, another Chinese Government holding company. Citic at one point

owned 20 per cent of Hongkong Telecom and has been trimming its investment in recent years. The reason behind the sales is not known, although analysts note that telecommunications may no longer fit Citic's investment strategy.

China Everbright, whose subsidiaries are listed in Hong Kong, has a diversified portfolio of investments. It is a shareholder of China United Telecommunications Corp, known as Unicom, which was set up in 1994 to compete with the Ministry of Post and Telecommunications, China's main phone company. Unicom has been tipped as a possible partner for

Hongkong Telecom, which may explain China Everbright's purchase of the stake from Ctic.

C&W, which owns 58.5 per cent of Hongkong Telecom, said: "We welcome the proposed investment by China Everbright. This substantial investment of Chinese state capital demonstrates continued confidence in Hongkong Telecom and Hong Kong through the 1997 transition and beyond."

C&W is under pressure from Beijing to reduce its ownership of Hongkong Telecom. The company has suggested that it is willing to do so, but only in return for greater access to the China, the world's fastest growing telecoms market.

In a recent interview, Dick Brown, C&W's chief executive, hinted that a deal could be completed in time for the colony's handover. He called the Hongkong Telecom negotiations "the greatest challenge I've had in my life".

Mr Brown is expected to make a statement on the talks' progress at C&W's annual meeting on Wednesday. He has spent most of this week in Hong Kong.

Shares of C&W rose 10p to 511½p on the City's belief that the company may not lose outright control of Hongkong Telecom.

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BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Billionaire's stake in Christie's now 29.57%

JOSEPH LEWIS, the Bahamas-based billionaire, has increased his holding in Christie's, the fine art auctioneers, to just under one-third of the company, it emerged yesterday. Abel Inc, Mr Lewis's investment vehicle, bought three million shares for £8.85 million and now has 29.57 per cent of the company, intensifying speculation that he may launch a full takeover bid. Shares in Christie's rose 2p to 301½p.

A spokeswoman for Christie's would not comment on speculation that Mr Lewis may launch a full bid for the world's oldest auction house, but added: "We are obviously in contact with Mr Lewis as a major shareholder in the company." Mr Lewis recently paid £40 million for a 25 per cent stake in Glasgow Rangers Football Club. Mr Lewis, who at age 16 started work in his father's cafe in the East End of London, made much of his fortune from speculating on the money markets. His Christie's shares are now worth about £150 million.

Woolwich raises rate

THE Woolwich, the third largest building society, with 550,000 borrowers, is raising its standard variable mortgage rate by 0.31 per cent to 7.6 per cent. The increase will add about £9.48 to the monthly payments on a £50,000 interest-only mortgage. The new rate comes in immediately for new borrowers and from June 1 for existing customers. Halifax Building Society, Abbey National and Cheltenham & Gloucester were among the first lenders to move after interest rates rose from 6 per cent to 6.25 per cent on Tuesday. The Nationwide has so far resisted a rise.

Prowling recovery

A RESURGENCE in second-half trading helped Prowling, the housebuilder, to bounce back from its halfway slump to lift pre-tax profit to £7.7 million (£5 million) in the full year. The company, which six months ago was nursing a 46 per cent fall in half-time profits, said that demand had picked up sharply after last August as margins jumped from 5.7 per cent to 8.6 per cent. Terry Roydon, chief executive, said: "It's not going berserk, it's certainly not Kensington, but we are seeing a steady recovery." Earnings rose to 6.1p a share (4.1p), and a final of 2.1p makes 4p for the year, due on July 14.

Stagecoach 'low payer'

STAGECOACH, Britain's largest transport group, pays the lowest average weekly wage in the privatised bus industry, according to a survey from the Transport and General Workers Union. The company, which runs the largest proportion of round-town buses in Britain, was found to pay many of its drivers less than £4 an hour, with an average weekly wage of £186. The union said that the remaining publicly owned bus operators pay £208 a week. Go-Ahead and Firstbus, the transport groups, also pay a significant proportion of their drivers below £4 an hour, the survey said.

Watchdog snaps at BT

BT breached the terms of its licence in the way it runs Call Minder, its telephone answering service, according to a ruling from Ofcom, the telecoms regulator, yesterday. Don Crickshank, Director-General of Ofcom, said he was in no doubt that BT was at fault after completing an investigation into the service, which has more than 700,000 users. The inquiry follows a complaint from a rival. But the regulator said that unless BT's rivals can prove they are "seriously interested in setting up competing services", then BT may not be penalised.

New rail routes agreed

MORE freedom for private train companies to expand their services was signalled yesterday by John Swift, the rail regulator. He ruled that the South Wales and West company can run new, through-rail services in competition with CrossCountry, operated by Richard Branson's Virgin Group. Railtrack had originally said that South Wales and West, run by Prism Rail, did not have the right to operate the new services from Manchester to London Waterloo, Manchester to Penzance in Cornwall and Liverpool to Portsmouth in Hampshire, all via Newport in Gwent and Bristol.

JLI bid talks end

SHARES in JLI Group fell 6p to 55½p yesterday after the specialist foods company said talks on a possible takeover of the business had ended without agreement. In February JLI shareholders were told of preliminary approaches "which may or may not lead to an offer being made for the company". Yesterday the company said that current trading in the group's continuing operations is in line with management's expectations. The group expects to announce its year-end results on June 12.

T&B pays £17m for rival

TIBBETT & BRITTEN, the distribution company, is preparing to swallow its smaller rival, Applied Distribution, in a deal worth about £17 million. T&B announced yesterday that it is in discussions with Applied about a possible all-share offer at around 48p per share. The news sent shares in Applied up 6p to 42p while T&B's shares rose 1p to 622½p. Barings, Applied's adviser, was reprimanded by the Takeover Panel in February for not consulting it on two occasions when the company's share price moved sharply.

Graseby sells in US

GRASEBY, the UK electronic instruments group, has sold Graseby Controls Inc, a US subsidiary, to TB Word's Inc for around £3 million. The subsidiary, based in North Carolina, manufactures motor control products and includes the activities of the former Graseby Volkmann Corporation. Last year, Graseby Controls had sales of £3.2 million and a trading profit of £400,000. At the end of 1996, net assets were £900,000. Graseby will use the proceeds of the disposal to reduce borrowings.

Siebe in agreed £327m bid for APV

By OLIVER AUGUST

SIEBE, the engineering company, yesterday launched an agreed £327 million bid for APV, the manufacturer of equipment for the food and drinks industry.

The bid values APV shares at 105p; they stood at 57p when the first indications of a bid surfaced last month. Siebe revealed that it had been behind the first of two expressions of interests; the other is believed to have been by GEA of Germany.

Allen Yurko, chief executive of Siebe, said that his group would unlock the growth potential of APV, which is undergoing restructuring at present. The combined group would be "the world's leading food, beverage, dairy and pharmaceutical process automation company", he said.

Siebe is offering 0.11 new

Field talks to Chile's pensions reformer

By ROBERT MILLER

THE man who led the privatisation of pensions in Chile has held talks with Frank Field, the new Social Security and Welfare Reform Minister, it emerged yesterday.

José Piñera, the president of the International Centre for Pension Reform, told delegates at the annual conference of the National Association of Pension Funds (NAPF) in Harrogate that because of the reforms to the Chilean pension system "pensions have ceased to be a government issue, thus depoliticising a huge sector of the economy and giving individuals more control over their own lives".

The success of Chile's private Pension Savings Account (PSA) has led to seven other South American countries following suit, said Dr Piñera. These include Peru in 1993 and Argentina and Colombia in 1994.

By 1998, more than 30 million workers in Latin America will have a funded, individually owned and privately operated retirement plan. Chile boasts that its PSAs have already accumulated an investment of \$25 billion.

Dr Piñera concluded: "A typical Chilean worker is not indifferent to the behaviour of the stock market or interest rates. Intuitively, he knows that a bad Minister of Finance can reduce the value of his pension rights."

Siebe shares for each APV share with a full cash alternative of 97½p per APV share. Siebe already owns 3 per cent of APV shares.

The main benefit of the acquisition is expected to come from combining Siebe's and APV's marketing networks. Barrie Stephens, chairman of Siebe, said: "There are significant growth opportunities, clear operating synergies and the combination of the two companies will create increased shareholder value."

Siebe made its first bid for APV in 1986 in a bitterly fought takeover battle. It valued APV at £220 million but the offer was rejected by APV shareholders.

Analysts consider the two businesses a good fit generally, but Siebe was said to be paying over the odds. Chris Hemmings, at Lehman Brothers, said: "It is a very expensive purchase. They will have to double the profits of the business before it adds anything in terms of shareholder value. The fact that it adds to earnings per share is irrelevant."

Siebe defended its move, saying that APV will be subjected to Siebe's overall growth target of 10 per cent per annum.

Siebe will inherit more than 1,000 APV employees. Mr Yurko said that the deal "could mean some additional reductions in staff". APV has already reduced its workforce from around 13,000 to 7,000.

Siebe's shares rose 10p, to 96½p, while APV's were up 15p at 107½p.

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Ringing the changes: David Fisher, the chairman of the Chicago Board of Trade, left, William Crowe, US ambassador to the UK, centre, and Jack Wigglesworth, chairman of Life, ring the bell to mark the start of trading on the first day of the amalgamation of the world's two largest futures exchanges, moving a step closer to a 24-hour trading day.

Cheshire challenges Halifax

By MARIANNE CURPHEY

CHESHIRE County Council has launched a campaign to persuade the Halifax Building Society, set for a £1.2 billion stock market flotation next month, to give free shares to 50 elderly residents in its care.

The council claims the residents will miss out on about 10,000 shares worth more than £40,000 simply because they have mental disabilities.

Nearly eight million Halifax customers are to receive free shares worth an average of £1,300 each when the society floats on June 2. However, many people have been excluded because only the first-named person on an account is eligible for the lucrative windfalls. This means that some people whose accounts are operated by others, such as disabled people, those in care and some residents of elderly people's homes, have lost out.

John Collins, leader of Cheshire County Council, said legal action was "a possibility". He has written to Frank Dobson, Secretary of State for

Health, asking him to intervene, and is also seeking the backing of Cheshire's 11 MPs.

New legislation was approved in March that will change the system of entitlement in the future and give more rights to the disabled.

A Halifax spokesman said: "We don't discriminate against any group. There is no legal action Cheshire County Council can take. Many disabled people will receive free shares. We believe our scheme is fair."

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Cost of reshaping NIE hits profits

By OLIVER AUGUST

RESTRUCTURING charges made in anticipation of new price controls almost halved Northern Ireland Electricity.

David Jeffries, chairman, said that NIE incurred reorganisation costs of £50.6 million last year after a dispute with Douglas McIlroy, the industry regulator, who had demanded a better deal for consumers. In the year to March 31, pre-tax profit fell to £60 million, from £104.4 million.

The dispute looked likely to be settled last month, when the Monopolies and Mergers Commission called for a review

of the cost of 25 per cent this financial year. However, the regulator has not yet accepted the findings of the MMC, to which he had referred the matter. NIE wrote to him last week to put the case for accepting the MMC findings.

Mr Jeffries said that the MMC decision was harsher than he had hoped.

Sales grew modestly last year, from £525 million to £560 million. Earnings per share fell to 21.1p, from 38.8p, but the full-year dividend rises to 20.9p (11p), with a final 15.4p (11p).

Mr Jeffries began the business in 1975 with one shop, named Hobbies and Models.

Mr Jeffries said that the true pre-tax profit last

Millionaire club as Fogel sells Toy Stack to Hamleys

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

DAVID FOGEL, founder of the Toy Stack chain of toy shops, is set to become a millionaire after agreeing to sell his business to Hamleys.

Mr Fogel, 42, who was sole owner of Toy Stack, will also collect a net dividend worth £1.44 million ahead of the sale's completion.

Hamleys intends to carry on running Toy Stack, which has 11 branches, as a separate brand.

Mr Fogel began the business in 1975 with one shop, named Hobbies and Models.

year was nearer £1.4 million, because Mr Fogel underpaid himself. Mr Dyer said that the results for the whole year will be "heavily dependent on trading during the Christmas period".

Mr Dyer said the acquisition "will enhance Hamley's earnings in the current year and in the first full year of trading". He said that buying Toy Stack was a way of making the most of Hamley's "buying and toy retailing skills".

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Tring founder seeks to oust old school chum

By CHRIS AYRES

A POWER struggle that would not be out of place in an episode of *Dallas* erupted at Tring International yesterday when one of the company's founders launched a bid to oust its co-founder and former school friend from the board.

Mark Frey and Philip Robinson, who met in the 1960s at Buckingham College in Harrow, fell out two years ago when their cut-price music and video publishing company ran into a series of high-profile rows over copyright.

Tring was accused by A&M records over an instrumental album of Chris Rea songs, and Cameron Mackintosh's *Les Misérables* album that did not feature the original cast. The company also became involved in copyright disputes with Polygram, EMI, MCA, Island and K-Tel.

Tring has since seen its share price nosedive from 151p to 11p, and the company suffered a pre-tax loss of £10.4 million for the six months to September 30 last year.

Mr Frey, who was forced to resign as joint chief executive 18 months ago, now proposes to remove Mr Robinson, who is currently chief executive, along with Joe Bollom, the chairman, and Steve Porter, the finance director. He has the support of Jay Chernow, a major shareholder, and if successful Mr Frey and two others will replace the present board.

The future of the company will be decided at an extraordinary general meeting before May 29, the date that Tring's preliminary results for the year ended March 31 are due to be announced. Since Mr Frey resigned, Tring had



Philip Robinson, left, and Mark Frey in happier times

THE SUNDAY TIMES INSTANT INTEREST

• Brown stopped Burns in mid-sentence. "There is this we would like to do," he said, producing a letter setting out the plan that was to have such a stunning impact.

In Business, tomorrow

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A WORKING WEEK FOR: VANNI TREVES

Florentine advocate of life beyond the law

Jon Ashworth cross-examines a corporate lawyer who has managed to find the time to extend his busy brief to the boardroom

Monday C
Tuesday
Wednesday
Thursday
Friday

MOST lawyers are too busy billing clients to consider a life outside the office. Not Vanni Treves. He walks the streets of London, sits on company boards, and waves the flag for art galleries, in addition to running a fast-growing law firm. Not bad, for an Italian who arrived in the UK more than 50 years ago, not speaking a word of English.

Treves, 56, is about to log his 10th year as senior partner in Macfarlanes, a City law firm that combines aggressive tactics with a patrician pedigree. Richard Branson's family trusts are among the clients; while Treves acts personally for John Paul Getty II, the reclusive billionaire who saved Canova's *The Three Graces* for the nation.

He is a governor of London Business School, leads fund-raising for the National Portrait Gallery, and is chairman of three publicly quoted companies — BBA Group, where Roberto Quarto is chief executive. McKechnie, the Walsall-based components group; and Trinity Holdings, a maker of buses, dust carts and fire engines. Treves' father was killed fighting for the Allies during the liberation of Florence in 1944. His mother fell in love with an Englishman, and decamped to the UK, dispatching Treves on his new course. "At the age of five I found myself in London, and was put immediately, not speaking a word of English, into a little prep school. It sounded harsh, but it worked extremely well. I'm told, because in that kind of environment, one learnt the language incredibly quickly."

Schooling at St Paul's, and a law degree from University College, Oxford, have left Treves sounding every bit the Englishman. After graduating in 1961 at the age of 20, he set off for America, and embarked on a postgraduate degree at the University of Illinois in the splendidly named Champagne, south of Chicago.

On his return, he joined Macfarlanes, then a small, gentlemanly firm with an aristocratic clientele. "A little bit went up. I remember, on the law library notice board, saying that two partners would be visiting the college on such-and-such a day, in order to interview gentlemen who might be interested in becoming solicitors. I thought, well, I'll have a go."

He has spent 25 years with the firm, barring a one-year sabbatical on Wall Street in the late 1960s. The latter shaped his thinking. "Law now, in this country, is a business. At that time, it was a learned, somewhat introspective, profession, but the Americans were already there in terms of aggressive marketing, already practising law as a business, and I learnt a great deal from that."

Macfarlanes is not a big firm, ranking 25th in the Legal Business 100, with gross fees of £32.5 million in 1995-96. The top

You had to read The Times to show you could speak the language

five are Clifford Chance (£22 million); Linklaters & Paines (£167 million); Freshfields (£154.6 million); Allen & Overy (£138 million); and Slaughter & May (£133 million).

Fees aside, Macfarlanes is right up there with the leaders in terms of profitability, with each partner making an average profit of £343,000. Treves says: "We have, for many years, been in financial terms one of the most successful firms in the country, and I'd like to think our reputation continues to grow. We are not a huge firm. We don't pretend to be. What we'd like to be is a firm of choice for those, and there are many of them, thank goodness, who are not looking for a huge firm to do their business."

"All we've got to sell is our intelligence, our experience and our time. There are no widgets here. And it's a very competitive marketplace. London is full of extremely talented lawyers, and therefore to be distinctive, to be chosen by clients in such an environment, is a demanding business, and that's the business we're in."

As a corporate lawyer, Treves spends much of his time telling people how to run their businesses, so it was perhaps inevitable that he would be told to practise what he preached. In 1984, he became a non-executive director of Oceanside, a marine services company which he had seen to the market, and which was later to sport John Bryan of toe-sucking fame as managing director. Oceanside had "an extremely bumpy ride", but Treves stuck with it, since "rats don't leave sinking ships". During one of the calm spells, he quietly made his exit. The company shares were suspended earlier this year. Further directorships were to follow, including a stint with Saatchi & Saatchi. "I think it's a shame that so few people do it. Business lawyers do see an awful lot of how the world works, and have, I think, relevant experience." The fees paid to Treves as a director, are passed on to Macfarlanes.

Treves is the consummate City gent, with a club in St James's, and dinners at Westminster, and it is all too easy to forget his Italian origins. He once held an Italian passport, and was obliged to become a British subject in order to qualify as a solicitor. "You had to read an editorial from *The Times* to a policeman, in order to show you could speak the language properly."

He lives in Islington, north London, with his wife, Angela, and walks to Macfarlanes' office near Chancery Lane. They also have a home in Suffolk. Their three children are Alexander, who went to Eton and Cambridge, and is now with Mercury Asset Management in Singapore; William, another old Etonian, who is in his final year at Oxford; and Louise, who is boarding at Downe House, near Newbury in Berkshire. A gift from William — a large, sculptured vulture — sits in the corner of his father's airy office.



Gimmick-free zone: Vanni Treves says that all his legal practice has to sell "is our intelligence, our experience and our time. There are no widgets here"

Family holidays consist of "geriatric skiing" in Switzerland or America, and summer trips to Italy, where any number of aunts and uncles await. Treves was born in Florence, and is still torn. "The beauty of Florence, the vivacity of the Florentine, the vibrancy of life there, are almost beyond description. On the other hand, if you're a fairly organised person like me, the chaos, the absence of bus queues, the petty corruption, the constant disorganisation, are extremely irritating."

London has seen no shortage of mergers among middle-tier law firms, and Macfarlanes is an obvious target. "We've often approached, but we want to remain independent. We are a very, very tight-knit partnership. It was only recently, because the partners became so prolific, that I no longer knew the names of all my partners' children. When we say that partnership here is closer than marriage, we're only half-joking."

Being small has its advantages. "If you are in one of the great firms of England, Slaughter and May, Freshfields, and so on, what you are doing is defending a franchise. What we are doing is trying to build a great firm. And that requires very, very different mindsets." In other words, a partner in Macfarlanes has to try that much

harder. This sounds like a recipe for hardened aggression — the Dibb Lupton Alsop approach — but Treves insists otherwise. "There is a long tradition of civilisation in this firm. What we try to do is to be highly respected by our peers, while at the same time being extremely ambitious and trenchant in our attitude." Treves says he is fortunate to enjoy such variety. "I can't exaggerate how lucky I am to have that kind of responsibility. I have the firm, I have the companies. I have quite a lot of trusteeships, and I also have — and need to have, to avoid going potty — extramu-

ral activities." These include London Business School, which "bridges, admirably, the historic gap between management on the one side, and education on the other, in a way that this country is only belatedly managing to do. When you compare the quality and number of business schools in the US with the paucity in this country... lamentable."

Treves is chairman of the development board of the National Portrait Gallery, which he describes as one of Britain's undersung treasures. He loves watercolours, and painting in general.

On another front, he has just been asked to be chairman of a new NSPCC Justice for Children appeal seeking to fight paedophiles and afford better protection to child witnesses in court. "I can't begin to exaggerate the extent and subtlety of paedophile rings in this country. [It is] unbelievable how numerous and pernicious these rings are, and the NSPCC is doing some ground-breaking work in tracking down these people."

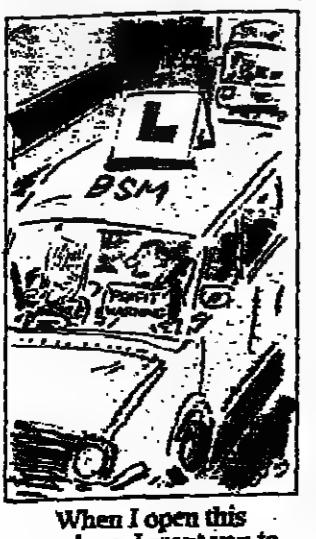
Treves is happy to continue as senior partner for as long as his peers allow — he is just starting his fourth, three-year term, and will continue in his own inimitable style. He walks at least two hours a day, and can often be found strolling through Covent Garden, on his way back from his achievements. "When my wife is asked what I do for a living, she says absolutely truthfully 'he eats, and he talks, in that order'. Absolutely true!" Those billings will have to wait.

End of an era

THE sad news arrives of the death of Jim Rowland-Jones, indefatigable fighter for the small shareholder in a series of boardroom battles over a period of at least 20 years. He died on Thursday morning at his Bournemouth home aged 70. So effective was his lobbying that on at least two occasions he managed to have Department of Trade inspectors appointed to examine his claims. A colleague, then on *The Sunday Times*, recalls that Jim would regularly arrive at that newspaper's offices as editions were going to press and insist on dragging him out for a drink and an update on his latest campaign.

His last battle before semi-retirement was against Andrew "Terzan" Greystoke, the fringe financier who must have regretted the day he tried to remove Rowland-Jones as chairman of Bremner, a Glasgow department store business. That battle continues in the courts after his death, his son James assures me, a decade or more after it started.

A STORY from the architectural profession confirms everything we all suspected



When I open this envelope, I want you to do an emergency stop.

about traders at Liffe. Sir Norman Foster's firm is now designing the stately pleasure dome at Spitalfields that the market will one day occupy, and the clean-living architects have run into a peculiar snag. It seems the 10,000-odd traders there will need huge areas set aside for smoking rooms, because a full half of them are slaves to the weed. Liffe's current base at Cannon Street is also non-smoking and has the usual designated areas, although I recall from my last visit that, as in most offices, smokers tended to huddle on window-sills and outside walkways when the urge took them. A Liffe spokeswoman denies any significantly higher level of addiction to tobacco or anything else, but adds: "It is a more stressful job."

Off the rails

NOTE the unusual strength of Railtrack shares earlier this week, on the day that South West Trains was let off with a derisory fine and it became obvious that Labour would not include reform of rail regulation in the next Queen's Speech. Directors have been known to suggest privately to the City that Railtrack is bombproof whichever party is in power, because their own regulator, John Swift, can only be removed for "incapacity or misbehaviour" (almost impossible; the same applies to judges, and try sacking one of them) or by Act of Parliament, and can do what he wants until November next year when his contract runs out.

The market obviously believes them. Not so, says my man in the anorak on the railway cuttings, Gavin Strang, the minister into whose bailiwick this falls, might care to glance at something called the Deregulation and Contracting Act 1994, section 1 thereof, for a start. This allows him to change the law by statutory in-



strument, that is, pretty well overnight. This is known in the trade as "Henry VIII powers". It seems, Mr Strang is better on mad cows, his last area of expertise, than on railway regulation, but he should not believe the Sir Humphreys who tell him nothing can be done.

Co-operative?

ONE would hate to cast a dampener over the victory celebrations at the Co-Operative Retail Services today, but power appears to have gone to someone's head. A couple of weeks ago, when the War of Andrew Regan's Egg had just been won, we asked the CRS if a representative of *The Times* could attend the annual meet-

ing in Holborn this afternoon and get an idea of the mood of the members. Said Harry Moore, chief executive, cheerfully: "I don't see why not." Now somebody who styles himself "Corporate affairs officer" — at the Co-op? — says the chairman, Peter Rowbotham, has had a think about it and decided to keep the press out. As to ordinary members' views, these are to be obtained from an information officer, whatever that is. It all sounds a bit Stalinist. As I recall, the last left-leaning business that made a habit of barring the press was run by Robert Maxwell, and look what happened to him.

Cashing in

JUST how far Standard Chartered has come was illustrated by Malcolm Williamson's good fortune this week. The bank's chief executive exercised his option on 103,000 shares awarded at 281p a share in 1993, a time when the bank was so accident-prone that it was questionable whether it would survive. On Thursday he cashed in his options at 958p a share, a profit of £600,000. His timing was not perfect — he could have waited until yesterday's surge in financial stocks, which left the shares worth £10.16p.

Malcolm Williamson: reaping his just rewards at Standard Chartered



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BOOM OR BUST? 36

Analysts disagree over how the Dow will move

THE TIMES: PERSONAL FINANCE NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

WEEKEND MONEY

HOPES DASHED 35

A divorcee paid the mortgage but missed the windfall



Scraping tax relief could cost £500 per year

Borrowers could find themselves paying more than £500 extra a year for an average £50,000 loan if the new Labour Government abolishes tax relief on mortgage interest (Sara McConnell writes).

There was no commitment in the Government's manifesto to preserve tax relief on mortgage interest (Miras), which has led to widespread speculation that the relief could be abolished sooner rather than later. Its value has been steadily eroded by a combination of government cuts and interest-rate falls, but it is still worth £28.50 a month on loan interest of £30,000. After this week's interest-rate rise, the value of Miras has risen slightly from its previous level of £27.17.

The higher mortgage rate will mean an extra £13.26 a month on mortgage bills for borrowers on the average £50,000 loan, the Halifax has

calculated. This higher mortgage bill coupled with the removal of tax relief would cost £41.76 a month at the new rates, or £50.12 a year.

The Government may well be tempted to rid itself of Miras while interest rates are low because it would be less painful for borrowers and less politically risky. But lenders and builders have lost no time telling Gordon Brown,

the new Chancellor, that abolition of Miras would be a blow to a housing market whose recovery in many areas of the country is still patchy.

Roger Humber, chief executive of the House Builders' Federation, said this week that any moves to abolish Miras, or impose VAT on new housebuilding would "stop the housing market dead in its tracks through much of the

country". Lenders are, however, remaining outwardly relaxed about the effect on the housing market of this week's quarter percentage point rise in base rates.

Large lenders including the Halifax, Abbey National, Cheltenham & Gloucester, Northern Rock, and Coventry reacted swiftly by raising their standard mortgage rates by more than the amount of the base-rate rise. The Cheltenham & Gloucester, now the mortgage arm of Lloyds Bank, raised its rate by the largest margin, from 7.22 per cent to 7.6 per cent. Last year the former building society abandoned its promise that it would hold mortgage rates lower than those of its competitors.

Northern Rock, by contrast, pledged to continue with its newly launched variable rate of 6.09 per cent, available through its direct mortgage arm.

WEEKEND MONEY
is edited by Anne Ashworth

Basic truths from Borneo

Two years ago, Bre-X Minerals was a virtually worthless little company in Alberta, Canada. Today, it appears to be totally worthless. In between, it was valued at more than £3 billion, hailed as the wonder of the mining world and included in a Toronto stock market index.

The difference between nothing and everything was a gold mining prospect in the deepest Indonesian rainforests of Borneo, a hot place for prospectors but one of the most obscure places left on earth for Westerners. Rights to the Busang prospect had been bought for \$80,000 by Bre-X's unprepossessing principals, hitherto an assortment of ambitious losers. It was Bre-X's last throw. But it came up.

There was gold in them thar hills. What's more, the world was told, it was contained in unusual geological circumstances that made it amazingly cheap to get out. So, as estimates of the reserves grew from three million to 200 million ounces, Bre-X's value grew in proportion.

Instead of being one of many shooting stars in a galaxy of Canadian mining stocks that have had a dodgy image since the Yukon gold rush, Bre-X moved on to claim a place among the world's top mining stocks.

As we now know, Busang's place in history will actually be as the locus of the world's worst mining fraud. The gold in the hills had been put there. No doubt a few shareholders went from dogs to dogs in those two years, but many directly involved in Bre-X sensibly realised a few pennies on the way. Outsiders should have done the same.

One Quebec pension fund managed to lose £30 million, but the stock was so actively traded that most investors were in and out at varying prices. The worst losers broke every sensible rule of investing by borrowing money to buy the shares last year, when they teetered round their peak for 12 months.

Even in genuine finds, such as the Australian nickel fireworks of the 1960s, prices go far ahead of events once everyone leaps in. Enthusiasm for the mineral tends to gloss over matters such as the cost of setting up a mine, claims by all and sundry for a piece of the action, the predations of the likes of Indonesia's ruling family and the need for independents to bring in experienced partners, such as those whose "due diligence" buried Bre-X.

Relatively few UK investors were in Bre-X, which makes it easy to be smug about those wild Canadians and Australians. But remember Lanica, the bubble stock that consisted only of a bare

PERSONAL INVESTOR
GRAHAM SEARJEANT

brain scheme to take over the Co-op. Those with long memories may also recall the El Sobrante platinum prospect in California. In 1970 it was set to transform E J Austin International, a failing British conglomerate like Busang. El Sobrante's value rested on local assays via a special process, which turned out to be salting the ore samples. Kenneth Howarth, chairman of E J Austin, was given a five-year jail sentence in 1975, but that did not help investors.

Honest mining is a gamble and for that reason big mining companies rely increasingly on small-time hopefuls to prospect the wilder shores. Investors looking after their retirement savings should not touch them. They are inherently high-risk, like many biotechnology and computer developments.

A part from inherent high risk, they fail the test that you should be able to understand what you are investing in. The amazing profits Poly Peck reported from hush-hush operations in northern Cyprus, or the huge returns that Barings earned from derivatives operations in Singapore are often too good to be true.

Gambling with money you can afford to lose is, however, an important role of private investors. Where would AIM stocks be otherwise? There, the rule is not to be too greedy; take some profits along the way. Beware too when a penny stock's price booms so far that it acquires a big market capitalisation without any visible means of support. That is the time to sell — and avoid being stuck when the music stops, with the next Bre-X or the next Lanica.

Homebuyers find release

The nation's ten million homebuyers were the first to taste the medicine when Gordon Brown announced a quarter-point rise in base rates to 6.25 per cent on Tuesday at the same time as revealing that, henceforth, the Bank of England will be responsible for interest-rate policy.

Lenders reacted swiftly by raising their standard variable mortgage rates by more than the base rate rise. Existing borrowers on variable rates — most home buyers — will start to pay an average 7.6 per cent on their loans from June 1, up from an average 7.25 per cent now. The markets are widely forecasting another quarter-point rise before the year end.

Such forecasts have sent borrowers scurrying to the haven of some of the remaining fixed-rate offers, hoping to protect themselves against further rises. But the best offers are rapidly being withdrawn and replaced with more expensive ones, which could start looking poor value if base rates drop back over the next

few years. Analysts think Mr Brown's surprise move to detach the Bank of England from political control could release homeowners from the interest-rate rollercoaster they have ridden for the past ten years.

Homebuyers should take out capped-rate mortgages, rather than fixed rates, to avoid being caught out if interest rates fall again in the next few years, mortgage advisers said.

Patrick Bunting, of London & Country Mortgages, the independent mortgage adviser, said:

"People will be more comfortable with an independent Bank of England because there will be less fear of political rises. Fixed rates look like a good deal now if people want to budget, but if they

have reasonable flexibility they should get a capped rate."

These protect borrowers from rises higher than a set amount but fall in line with falls in base rates so that borrowers benefit from lower rates. Mr Bunting favours Stroud & Swindon's three-year capped rate of 7.49 per cent which has no lock-in penalty at the end of the three-year term. This means borrowers are free to go elsewhere rather than be stuck with whatever variable rate the Stroud & Swindon has to offer. John Charcol has a capped rate guaranteed not to rise above 7.99 per cent for five years, with a current standard rate of 7.39 per cent. There is no penalty for changing lenders after five years.

Charles Levert-Scriver of Town Law, the independent financial adviser, said prospective borrowers wanting fixed rates should wait until lenders start offering new loans whose rates reflect falls in long-term interest rates.

Winding move, page 33

Leaseholders still waiting

Thousands of leaseholders in dispute with their landlords over service charges are still waiting for an easier, cheaper system of redress almost a year after such a system was promised (Sara McConnell writes).

Under the Housing Act 1996, which passed into law last July, leaseholders would be allowed to take service charge disputes to a Leasehold Valuation Tribunal (LVT) rather than the County Court. LVTs would charge a fixed fee and could not award costs unlike courts. Only a handful of leaseholders have dared to take their cases to court, fearing that they could face large costs. Final orders giving LVTs new powers

were meant to be signed into law in April but the general election intervened. Now Labour must decide whether to go ahead with LVTs or wait until it has time for more fundamental leasehold reform. Such reforms would include making it easier for leaseholders to buy freeholds and introducing a form of commonhold, allowing flatowners to own their homes individually and their block collectively.

But Hilary Armstrong, housing minister, will come under pressure to establish new LVTs to handle service charge disputes. Labour may have to abandon its previous objections to charging £500 to take a case to a LVT.

Expect gazump reform

As spring housebuyers do not need to be told that gazumping is back. Fierce competition for too few properties is tempting sellers to be ruthless, dumping buyers unceremoniously if a higher offer comes along.

According to a survey published this week by Barclays Bank, the mismatch of potential sellers and buyers, leading to gazumping, is most acute in the North East, where one in six people wants to buy, but only one in 19 wants to sell. In London's overheated market, one in seven wants to buy and one in 14 wants to sell.

Labour is pledged to combat gazumping.

One of the many tasks facing Hilary Armstrong, the Housing Minister, is to analyse the results of a consultative document on anti-gazumping measures issued in February. Labour sources report a good response and said yesterday they will now spend several months considering the feedback.

One proposal is a "costs guarantee". Buyer and seller would be liable to meet the other side's costs if either withdrew from the deal before exchange of contracts. Many buyers who are gazumped have already spent hundreds of pounds on solicitors' and surveyors' fees.

The signing of such a guarantee could become compulsory. But either side would be free to withdraw for good reason, such as if the buyer was caught in a chain.

SARA McCONNELL

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Karen Zagor, Caroline Merrell and Anne Ashworth on how tax changes may hit the Blairs

22

Tax time for the first family

The Blair family is set to see more than its surroundings change after the move into 11 Downing Street. The first Budget of the new Government, which is likely to take place in July will make the Chancellor Gordon Brown's views on family taxation clear.

The effect on the Blairs and other middle class families with above average income could be far reaching. Some of the most widely rumoured tax changes forecast to be included in the Budget could leave Blairs £10,200 worse off. This could mean Cornwall rather than Tuscany for the family holiday this summer.

There is speculation that Mr Brown will seek to cut the value of the personal allowances, the amounts individuals can earn before paying tax. He could reduce them to the 23 per cent basic rate of tax, so raising £1.6 billion, says Maurice Fitzpatrick of Chantrey Velacott, the accountant. This tax change alone would mean an extra £687 in tax each year for Mr and Mrs Blair.

There are also growing rumours that mortgage interest relief (Miras) could be phased out and that the tax relief on private pension contributions could be limited to the basic rate, more tax rises that would hit the Blairs.

■ THE BLAIR TAX BILL

Tony Blair, as revealed on Thursday, is entitled to an annual salary of £146,860, but



he has turned this down, saying he will take only £102,000. He can afford this pay restraint since Cherie is the family's main breadwinner. As a high-powered QC, she is capable of earning at least £250,000 a year.

At present, Tony and Cherie like everyone else have a personal allowance of £4,045 each. This reduces Tony's taxable earnings to £97,955 and Cherie's to £95,555.

Under the current tax regime, the first £4,100 after the personal allowance is taxed at 20 per cent, the next £22,000 is taxed at 23 per cent and any further earnings are taxed at 40 per cent. This results in a tax bill of £34,622.

Sarah Powell, tax consultant at KPMG, the accountant, said if Cherie contributes the maximum permitted to a personal pension, her taxable allowances will be £73,822.

National Insurance contributions deplete Tony's take-home pay by a further £160. Cherie would pay self-employed National Insurance of £1,344.80.

The Blair family's considerable tax burden is offset somewhat by a number of standard reliefs. Provided a couple is married, one person can claim the married couple's allowance which currently stands at £274.50 (15 per cent

of £1,830). Child benefit of £11.05 a week for the eldest and £9 for each subsequent child boosts Cherie's bank account by £1,510.60 a year.

Miras, given at the rate of 15 per cent on the first £30,000 of loans shaves another £326.25 off the annual tax bill, assuming interest rates of 7.25 per cent per annum.

Assuming that Mr Brown moves, as forecasted, to cut back personal allowances and

pension reliefs to 23 per cent and abolishes Miras, the Blairs would be left rather poorer, £10,200 poorer to be exact. Mr Fitzpatrick calculates that Tony would lose £1,013 and Cherie some £9,87.

She may be forced to go next door and personally lobby the Chancellor to give tax breaks on childcare — a concession available to high-earning Canadian mothers but not to their British counterparts.

HOME OWNERS' TAX EXCHANGE

Gordon Brown has pledged not to raise the income tax rates from their current level of 23 per cent (basic rate) and 40 per cent (higher rate). But as well as reducing the value of the personal allowances (see left), he could take other measures that would dent your spending power. The likely changes are now the subject of fevered speculation in the offices of accountants and financial advisers. The forecast changes include:

■ The reform of Capital Gains Tax. At present, everyone can have £6,500 a year worth of capital gains before paying tax. The new Government could reduce the annual exemption, and introduce tiered rates, allowing those who have held assets for a period of time to pay lower rates of tax.

■ Beside limiting the reliefs on pension contributions, Mr Brown could cut the rate of Advanced Corporation Tax, so reducing the return on your pension fund and personal equity plans.

Tax-exempt funds such as pensions and Peps can reclaim 20 per cent of the Advanced Corporation Tax paid by companies on their dividends, so boosting their value. A lower rate of tax would cause their income to drop.

Mr Brown could raise £5 billion by the abolition of Advanced Corporation Tax.

ANNE ASHWORTH AND CAROLINE MERRELL

But many of the UK's biggest pension schemes have voiced their opposition to any such move.

■ Labour, while in opposition, pledged many times that it would not abolish Peps or Tax Exempt Special Savings Accounts (Tessas) if it came to power. However, it is possible that a lifetime limit could be imposed on the amount invested in Tessas and Peps, as Labour prepares to launch its own stakeholder account. For Tessa best buys, see page 40. BEST Investment (0171-321 0100) also provides lists of Peps best buys.

■ Some £2.5 billion could be raised by an increase in insurance premium tax from 4 per cent to 12.5 per cent. This would cost the average household an extra £90 a year, more if you live in a high crime area with expensive household premiums. Chancellors feel safe raising insurance premium tax, because policyholders tend to blame the insurance companies for their higher bills, not the Government.

■ The Blairs and other inhabitants of expensive homes could be affected by a new higher band of council tax for homes worth more than £500,000. Band H currently covers homes valued from £320,000.

For sale: used policy, not such a nice runner

The Personal Investment Authority has been forced to don its overalls and give the market in traded endowments a thorough MOT, amid fears that the trade in second-hand policies is fast developing the worst traits of the trade in second-hand cars.

Central to the concern is the lack of clear information for both investors surrendering policies and those buying them in the secondary market. The fear is that while the first group is not getting paid enough, the latter is paying too much for investment performance that might not be there. To push the car analogy further, sellers of Rolls-Royces are getting Skoda prices while buyers of Ferraris are getting Robin Reliants.

Every year about 60,000 people decide to stop paying into endowment policies because they have changed their mortgage, or because they desperately need the money to pay off debts when they are made redundant or as part of a divorce settlement. Many sell the policies back to the life and insurance companies that issued them and get a raw deal. Although companies have raised surrender values

by 30 per cent in recent years, they are still about 15 per cent less than those available from market-makers such as Beale Dobie, Securised Endowment Contracts and Policy Portfolio. As the average endowment sold is worth £10,000, this is a potential loss of at least £1,000 per person.

Market-makers offer particularly good deals on endowments from companies such as Royal Life and SunLife of Canada, which pay low surrender values to keep as much money as possible for people who hold their policies until maturity. Of course, like all middle men, market-makers take their cut, and are choosy about the policies they take on. Beale Dobie, for instance, only buys policies worth at least £2,000 which have run for at least seven years — this is only 10 per cent of available policies. If you have to surrender early you will probably have to accept the price offered by the issuer. The

Association of Policy Market Makers, their trade body, wants endowment providers to publicise their market. It points to the fact that although the traded endowment policy (Tep) market has grown rapidly from nothing to nearly £20 million in just ten years, it is still a fraction of the £800 million of policies surrendered each year.

However, many life and insurance companies believe publicising the market will only encourage people to act against their own interest. Wherever they sell, policyholders are not going to gain much compared with the price of the premiums they have already paid. Sticking with the endowment is better in the long run. Companies also fear that the Tep is overvaluing policies and will create many disgruntled investors in the long term. The Tep market has recently displayed worrying signs of overheating. Specialist trusts run by BZW, Kleinwort

Benson and Scottish Value Management, which invest in Teps, have seen their share prices rise to a premium — a highly unusual feature for investment trusts where huge discounts are the norm.

More disturbingly, part of the recent rises in Tep prices has been laid at the door of unscrupulous providers of geared endowment plans. Here investors are encouraged to use the Tep as collateral with which to borrow money from a bank in order to buy more Teps. In this way £10,000 can buy three times that in policies, pushing potential annual capital growth up to 16 per cent. The inherent risk of this is exacerbated by the fact that some providers are believed to be changing investors almost double what the policies are really worth. Despite this, Teps are attractive because they can be an efficient and relatively low-risk way of

timing a tax-free lump sum when you want it. Taking on somebody else's endowment and paying the premiums until maturity can be particularly useful when planning school and university fees. Traditional with-profit endowment policies — which form the backbone of the Tep market — smooth the returns from a diverse bag of assets which includes shares, property and cash. Last year they achieved an annual average return of 9 per cent.

The price of a Tep is determined by various factors, including the length the policy has yet to run and the basic guaranteed sum it will pay at the end. However, unknown factors, such as the performance of the underlying investments and the amount that the issuer will pay in bonuses, are critical. Life insurance companies have steadily cut bonuses since the end of the 1980s as inflation has come down. David Beale, of Beale

Dobie, says the annual real rate of return from Teps will fall slightly from 9 per cent over the next year.

How much of this is known to investors is unsure. Many mistakenly take the average discount rate that market-makers use in their calculations as a projection of future growth; it is not.

Faced with the different demands of sellers and buyers, the PIA has a difficult balancing act. Richard Cockroft, the regulator's head of market practice, says: "There are two parties in any market, the buyer and seller."

"If we take action to improve the situation, for one, it could harm the interests of the other." Nevertheless, he is considering proposals to provide Tep investors with an explanatory key feature document at the point of sale. This would include growth projections and different charges, and market-makers fees and would put them on an equal footing with buyers of new endowments. Expect this one to roll out of the PIA workroom at the end of the year.

GAVIN LUMSDEN

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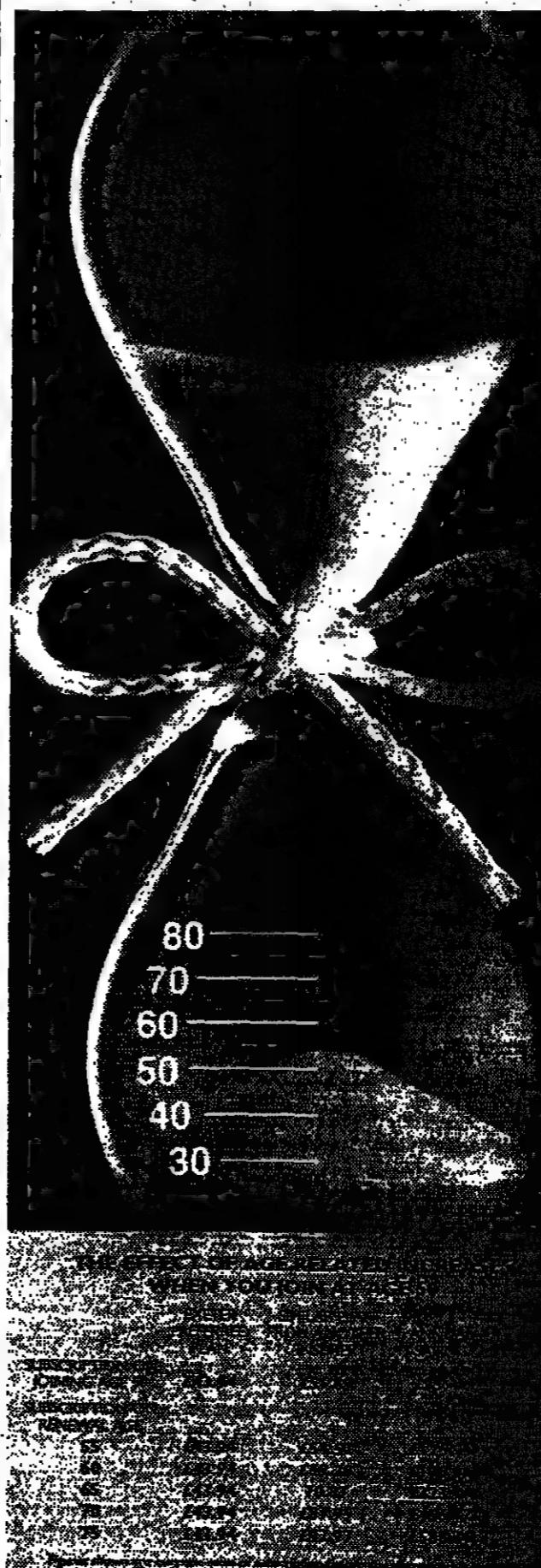
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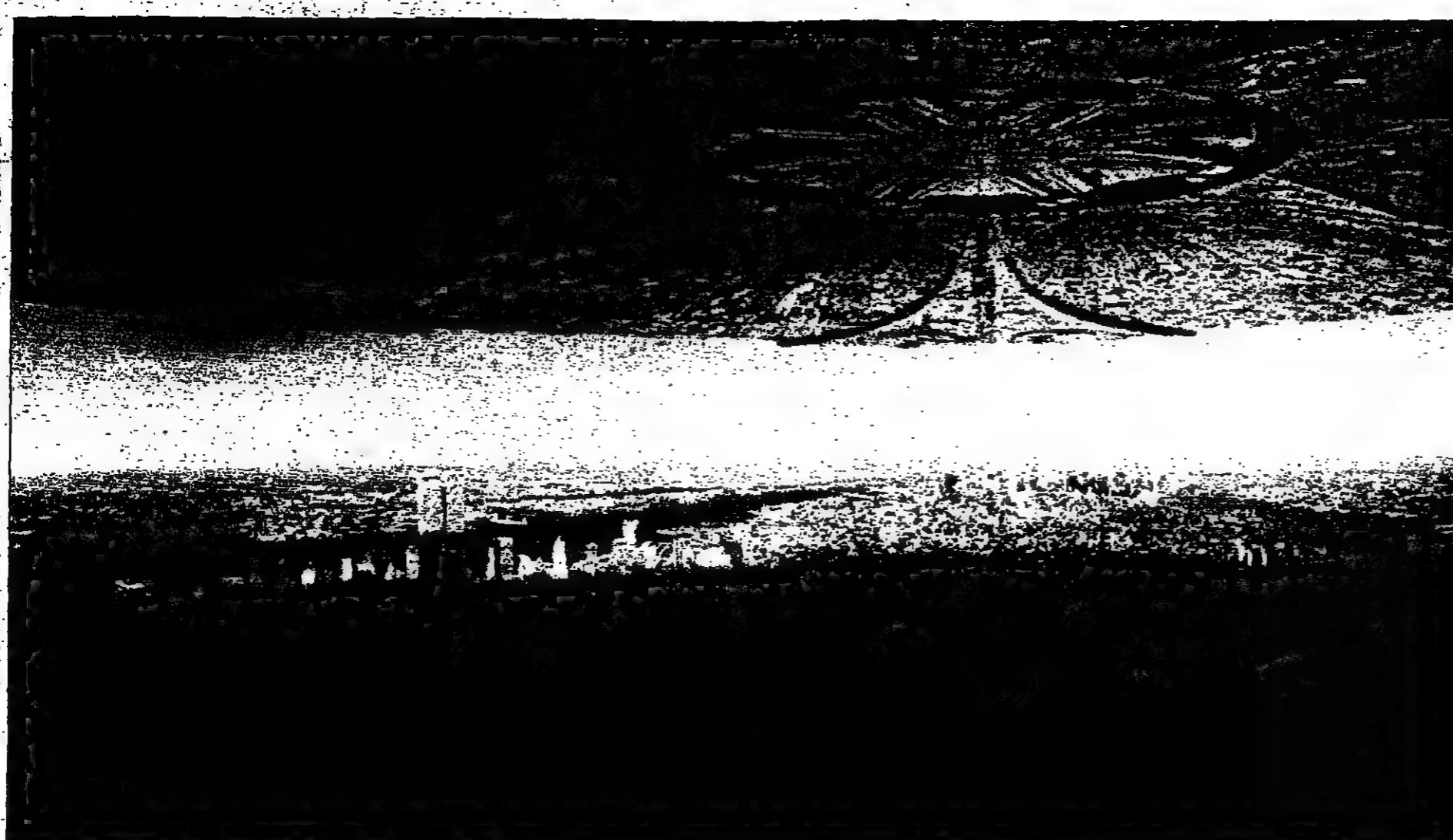
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Caroline Merrell on the positive impact of the Chancellor's first actions



The world was under alien threat in the film *Independence Day* but savers could benefit from this week's move to grant the Bank of England independence to set interest rates

A winning move for savers

Halifax Building Society has much to thank Gordon Brown for. The immediate 0.25 point increase in base rates and the Chancellor's move to grant the Bank of England independence gave the Halifax the excuse it needed to raise its savings rates.

The savings world is full of rumours that the newly quoted Alliance & Leicester is seeing customers decamp to seek better returns. The Halifax is more than eager to keep its savers after flotation.

Since the announcement of the society's flotation more than two-and-a-half years ago, its 15 million savers have seen interest rates dwindle. Its instant access account, for instance, now pays interest of 2.45 per cent on balances of £1,000. This is half the rate offered by other instant access accounts. Sainsbury's offers 5.75 per cent, Skipton Building Society offers 4 per cent, and Portman Building Society offers 4.7 per cent. Even if the Halifax increases savings rates by 0.35 points, bringing the instant access rate to 2.8 per cent, a saver with £10,000 will get only £35 a year extra interest. This looks even more miserly compared with inflation of 2.6 per cent, giving real returns of just 0.2 per cent.

The increase in savings rates will come just before the Halifax makes its stock market debut. The flotation is sure to lead many of its savers into trying to find a more lucrative home for their savings.

The Halifax is refusing to say how much it intends to increase its rates. However, even if rate on its instant access account moves to 2.8 per cent, this rate is still lower than its competitors.

SAVINGS: Abbey National also announced that it intended to raise its savings

rates. Currently, Abbey offers its instant access savers a rate of 2.5 per cent. Skipton and Bradford & Bingley, both of which offer competitive savings rates, also said they intend to push up savings rates.

Nationwide, the UK's second-biggest building society, said that it was taking a wait-and-see attitude to rates. Its instant access account, for instance, offers an interest rate of 3 per cent on balances of £1,000. This society, along with the other mutuals, such as Bradford & Bingley, Skipton and Portman, has pledged that it will offer the best savings rates.

Bristol & West, which is in the process of being taken over by the Bank of Ireland, was the first to increase savings rates. It put up the rates on its tracker bond to 6.05 per cent, an increase of 0.25 points.

Other savings and income products have yet to benefit from the 0.25 per cent rise in interest rates. National Savings, which offers a range of fixed-interest products, with rates of up to 7 per cent on its 3rd Series Pensioners Bond, said that it had no intention of changing rates.

He advised investors hoping to put money into gilts to look at the longer-term products. He said: "I would look at the longer end of the gilt market quite seriously. If you are taking a long-term view, you could well see the trend of rising prices continue. It has definitely been set in motion, yields will fall and capital values will rise. However, any buying of longer-term gilts should be approached with caution."

GILTS AND BONDS: Other winners following the Chancellor's move are those who hold gilts and corporate bonds, either directly or through a personal equity plan (Pep). Many foreign investors and UK pension funds bought longer-dated gilts immediately after the announcement of an independent Bank. Gilt buyers believed that taking the politics out of interest rate decisions would be better for inflation.

CORPORATE BONDS: Corporate bond Peps have also done well out of the Chancellor's move. The yields on corporate bonds are linked to

the yields on gilts. Corporate bonds are fixed-interest securities issued by companies such as ICI and Commercial Union. They will tend to have a higher yield because they are deemed to be riskier than gilts.

Some corporate bond Peps jumped as much as 3 per cent in value at the beginning of the week after the announcement. Those Peps that did best were

those with a high proportion of their investment held in gilts and corporate bonds. Other corporate bond Peps, holding a high proportion in convertible and preference shares, and UK equities did not experience the same sort of increase.

Mr Cockerill said an independent Bank was bound to make interest rates more volatile as the Bank would act with more alacrity to ease inflationary pressures.

He said: "An independent Bank is almost a trial run for monetary union. It will have a knock-on effect to our approach. The Bank must read inflation changes correctly — more movement, less pressure to keep interest rates down. It has been depoliticised so that has to be a good move."

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COMMENT
ANNE ASHWORTH
Personal Finance
Editor

Put pensions on pole position

The new Chancellor has already shown himself to be audacious. John Denham and Frank Field, the two ministers now responsible for pensions, should prove themselves as bold in their reforms. They must encourage the nation to make pension saving a priority. Their aim will be accomplished when 25-year-olds show as much interest in pensions as in cars, discussing the relative merits of Equitable Life and NPL in the same way that they now compare the Mazda MX5 and the Golf VR6.

But Messrs Denham and Field should not concentrate all their efforts on ensuring that the young invest enough for the day when the Mazda makes way for the Metro. They should also consider persons close to retirement who can face as many tricky pension decisions as those in their twenties.

To date, those pronouncing on pensions have failed to emphasize that choosing the annuity from which your pension will be paid can be as fraught with risk as selecting a personal pension. Most choose the annuity offered by the insurance company which has invested their pension contributions, unaware that they are free to seek quotes from competitors with potentially more generous rates. The difference between offers may be as much as 10 per cent, or the Metro's annual running costs.

Most are ignorant of the importance of good timing, of how annuity rates depend on the moods of the gilt market. This week, annuity rates have fallen, as gilt prices rose (see page 39). Unfortunate annuitants who opted to retire in early May rather than in late April have seen a drop of 6 per cent in their expected income.

Various small changes could make the £4 billion annuity market less impenetrable. For example, insurance companies should be obliged to make it more clear to customers that they have a choice and can purchase their annuity elsewhere. Some believe that companies should also be compelled to reveal how their rates compare with those of competitors. What point the ideal pension fund if your pension is poor?

Best-buy bound

The Nationwide is said to be attracting as much as half a million pounds a day in deposits from the newly quoted Alliance & Leicester. Halifax savers of an indolent turn can now relax. When their society floats, they will have no need to go to the bother of moving their money for a better rate. Rather than see millions decamp to mutuals, the Halifax will be forced, however reluctantly, to improve significantly its parsimonious rates and to appear for the first time on the savers' best buy tables.

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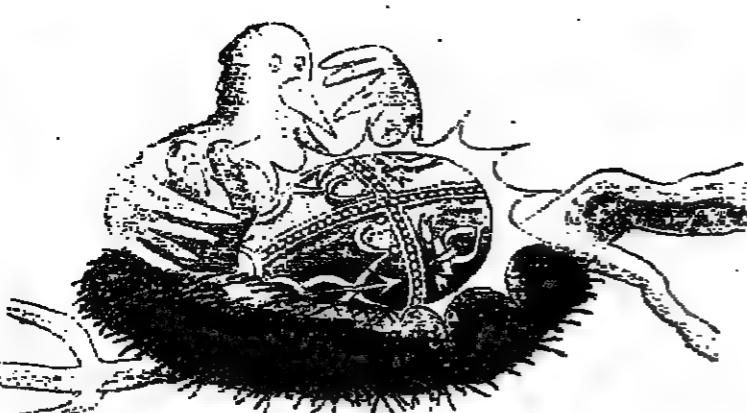
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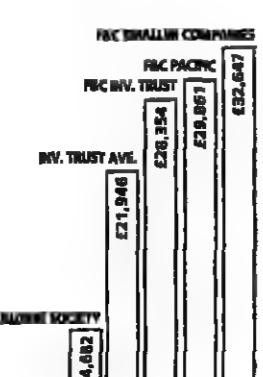
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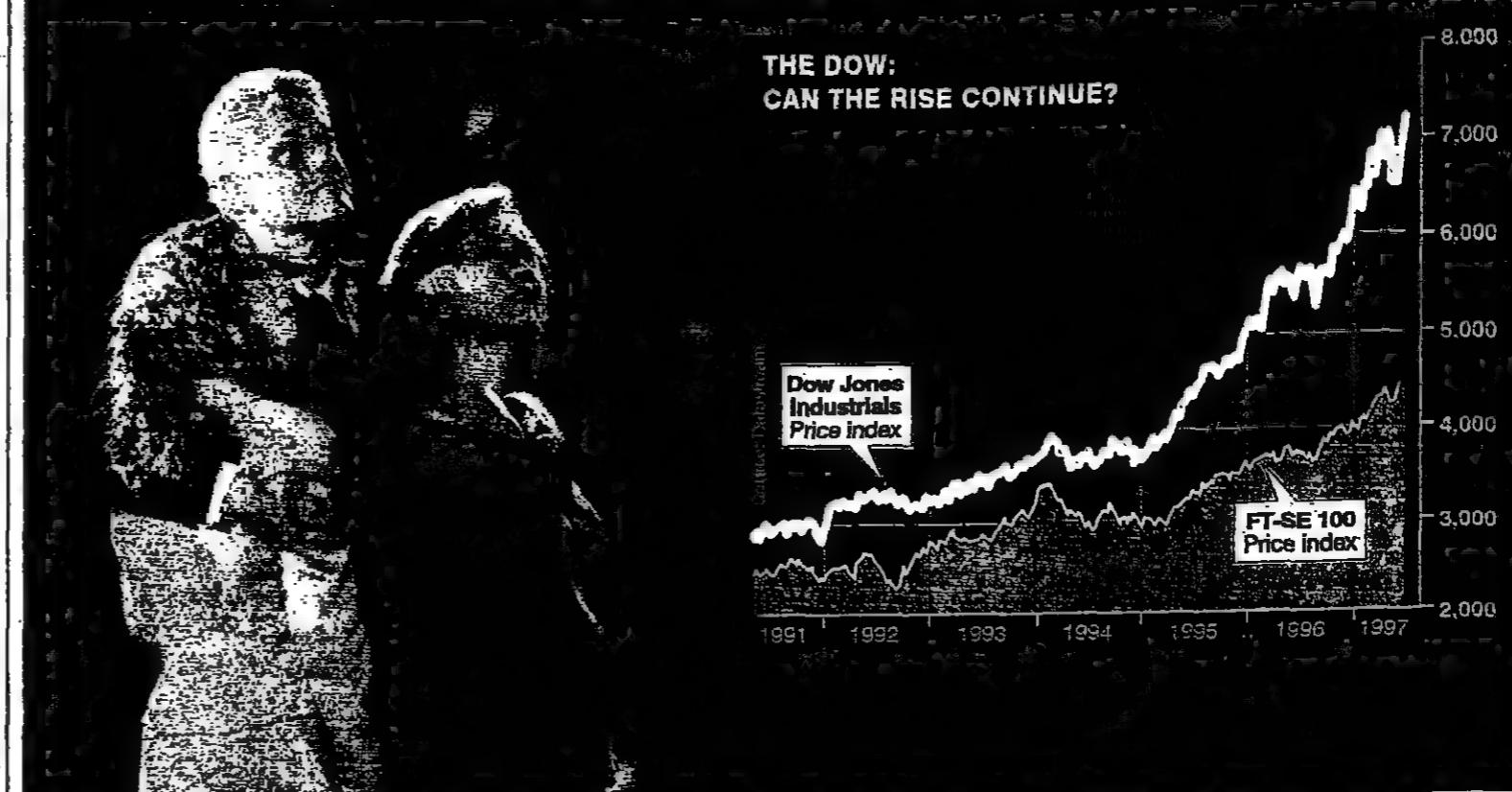
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Boom or bust with the Dow?

Experts are divided over which way the US stock market will go, says Nathan Yates

The US market is on the crest of an unprecedented six-year surge. This week the Dow Jones industrial average peaked at a record 7,214.49 points, more than 4,000 points up on its level in May 1991.

For investors, selling now would be a brave choice. It could also be the best one. In spite of excellent economic performance figures, underlying trends mean that many analysts and fund managers are gearing up for at best a slowdown and, at worst, a crash.

In the first quarter of this year, US GDP growth was at a rapid 5.6 per cent, but inflation remained low at 2.7 per cent. The picture resembles the much-covered 'Goldilocks economy', not too hot and not too cold, like the fairy tale heroine's porridge. But some analysts are unimpressed. George Magnus of UBS says: "The US equity market is on dangerous ground. We predict that the Dow Jones will sink to 6,500 points by year end, and the further it climbs meantime, the more likely there will be a crash. A correction of 10 per cent is highly probable."

Mr Magnus believes that the US market is at the top of the business cycle. Strong growth has boosted demand for labour, goods and services, which will soon outstrip supply.

Wages and prices will rise, and the only way to control inflation will be to raise interest rates. The Federal Reserve, America's central bank, could decide to increase rates as early as May 20. When interest rates are pushed

high enough, a market fall will follow. UBS claims that this top-of-cycle scenario is being obscured by several factors. Foremost among these is a freak worldwide situation in which the three main trading blocks — the US, Europe and Japan — have moved out of synchronisation. German reunification has upset the business cycle in Europe, and Japan has been hit by a collapse in property prices.

With the other two main economic powers in relative recession, US growth has been offset by weaker demand elsewhere, and prices have been held down. UBS says that the three trading blocks are beginning to converge again as Europe and Japan recover. The IMF forecasts world growth will accelerate to 4 per cent in 1997 and 1998, and the international brakes could soon be removed from US prices.

In addition, US wages have been held down by job insecurity. But with unemployment now at 4.9 per cent of the population, the lowest for a generation, those who lose their jobs can expect to find new work quickly. Worker confidence is growing, and figures released this week show a 4.7 per cent leap in hourly pay, the largest increase for five years. Some of the recent wage rises have been offset

by improvements in productivity. Though US workers may be paid more, they produce more goods per hour than they did before the boom, and this has kept down the total costs of producing *itzem*. But there is a logical limit on how far efficiency can be improved with current technology, and productivity could also be about to hit the ceiling.

It is the combination of underlying factors that has persuaded many US fund managers to stay clear of the US market. Gartmore, Fidelity and S&P Prosper are all low on US investments.

"We are underweight in US stocks, and we share that position with the majority of UK investment houses," said Michael Ashbridge of S&P Prosper. "Valuation in the US market is very stretched. We are particularly worried about the huge investment in US mutual funds. This money is very liquid, and in the worst scenario it could all be withdrawn quickly."

Fund managers admit that their underweight position in US stocks has meant a loss in profits as Wall Street has proved as miraculously immune to its detractors as Bill Clinton's Presidency. Some analysts are less pessimistic

about American prospects. A report this week by the impressively bullish Abby Cohen of Goldman Sachs claims that US economic conditions are highly favourable.

It forecasts that equity prices could even rise a further 25 per cent if the possible reduction in capital gains tax takes place, and long-term investors can look forward to a surge in entitlements spending when the baby-boom generation begins to retire. But Goldman Sachs concedes that future returns are likely to be considerably lower than over the past six years. In its opinion, American stocks are at "fair" value.

Warren Buffet, head of Berkshire Hathaway and known to his followers as the " sage of Omaha", also gave warning this week that returns on equities in the next ten years will be significantly lower than during the past decade.

It could be time to seek better value in European or Asian markets. Then again, some analysts have been saying this since 1993, and investors who followed their advice have lost out to a spectacular degree.

If you decide that the US boom still has some years to run, analysts' collective fund tips include Credit Suisse Transatlantic, Gartmore American Emerging Markets, Perpetual American Growth, US Smaller Companies Investment Trust, Schroder US Smaller Companies and Perpetual American Smaller Companies.

Bold moves spur stocks and bonds

The Labour Government's first week has been characterised by bold political decisions, unprecedented stock market highs and bullish bond markets in marked contrast to the uncertainty and volatility of the past two months.

The FT-SE 100 index hit record highs throughout the week, driven by Chancellor Gordon Brown's decision to hand over monetary policy to the Bank of England after his first and last base rate increase of 0.25 per cent.

Although the rate rise was expected, the Bank decision was not. Financial shares powered the stock market surge on the surprise news, with the FT-SE 100 index ending the week 175.3 points up at 4,630.9, despite continued volatility on Wall Street.

The market was cheered by the Government's clear intention to keep a tight rein on inflation. The news was especially welcomed by the bond markets — as this column predicted it would be several weeks ago — with benchmark ten-year gilts rising more than two points to 101.88, while yields fell from 7.57 per cent to 7.09 per cent. The friendly signals towards Europe from Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, are also music to the bond markets' ears.

Bob Semple, market strategist at NatWest Securities, the stockbroker, said: "New Labour is proving to be just that. We have seen them embrace



ing the market economy and proving true to their word. They are even showing themselves, in the case of the Bank of England decision, to be bolder than the Conservatives. Now we wait to see what they do in the Budget."

Banks continued to thrive all week. Notably, HSBC, which owns Midland Bank and James Capel, the broker, leapt 87.5p to 472.5p on Thursday on the back of a positive turnaround in the Hong Kong market on Wednesday. There is renewed optimism that China will adopt a laissez-faire attitude towards the country's free market after next month's handover.

Abbey National, NatWest, Lloyds TSB and Barclays all performed strongly, as did newcomer Alliance & Leicester. And with the Halifax Building Society's £10 billion flotation just three weeks

away, banks are likely to remain in the spotlight.

But John Aitken, banking analyst at UBS, the broker, said: "Irrespective of the Bank of England decision, there is the general shortage of bank sector stock which is driving prices up. The building society floatations are making institutions realise that they have to increase weightings in what is the biggest stock market sector, so there is competition for the stock and not enough to go round."

The theory is that with the Bank of England in control, long-term interest rates should come down once inflation is well and truly pegged. Low interest rates are generally good for equities.

Wednesday's news that BSkyB was forming an alliance with BT, Midland Bank and Matsushita, to develop an interactive digital television network helped to push its share price up 5.5p to 60p. And the news that ICI is buying Unilever's specialty chemicals business for £5 billion helped to push the stock up 43p to 757.5p on Wednesday after a prolonged period of underperformance.

But sterling's strength now underpinned by this week's base rate rise, will continue to cause difficulties for companies such as BTR, the diversified industrial. Its shares fell 14 per cent after a second profit warning within a year. Elsewhere, retail sales figures from the CBI this week

showed a positive balance of 42 per cent of retailers reporting annual growth compared with 32 per cent a year ago. Furniture and carpet retailers, DIY stores and clothing shops all reported improved sales,

indicating that the consumer-led economic recovery, dominated so far by the services sector, is filtering through to the retail sector.

MATTHEW WALL

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Sara McConnell on the problem of maximising retirement income



Potatoes m'am or potatoes? Choosing between a pension, a Pep or a Tessa can prove just as difficult

When the time comes to choose

Should you put all your retirement savings into a pension? Or would you do just as well putting the contributions into a personal equity plan or other savings scheme?

One thing is certain. Doing nothing to save towards your retirement will no longer be an option unless you are prepared to live from hand to mouth. Politicians from all sides of the spectrum made it clear during the election campaign that people will be expected to supplement the basic state pension with their own contributions.

The unspoken assumption is that this will be through top-up contributions to personal pensions into which a compulsory slice of salary has already been paid to provide basic provision.

But recent letters to the Pensions Postbag column reveal some public disillusionment with personal pensions. High charges, poor performance and inflexible rules when peoples' circumstances change have all led readers to question whether it is worth pouring hard-earned money into schemes which appear to represent such poor value for money.

Could a Pep or Tessa give them a better deal for their retirement, many readers ask. Here are extracts from just two of the letters.

I pay £101.33 per month into a pension plan which I took out in February 1994 and which may provide a yearly pension of £770 before tax when I retire in 2000. The question in my mind is whether I would be better off putting the monthly contribution into a Tessa or a Pep, or even just spending it."

"I have accumulated only a very small pension fund from past periods of employment. Since 1992, my husband, who is already receiving his pension, has paid voluntary National Insurance contributions of £309 a year to help me to boost my state pension. I am wondering whether it would be better to use this money towards some form of Pep to produce an income for me when I reach pensionable age. I have fought shy of this until now because I believed that management charges would eliminate much of the contributions which can only be in the region of £25 a month."

advantage that you will not lose capital nor face high initial or continuing charges, but the value of your investment could erode if inflation rises. Even if it does not return on deposit accounts have historically been lower than on equity-based investments such as pensions or Peps.

■ Personal equity plans (Peps) are equity based. There is a risk of losing capital if stock markets fall, but retirement provision should be long term. Like pensions, your investment will roll up tax-free. Unlike pensions you will also receive the final fund tax-free. Peps have two main advantages over pensions for

continuing charges, depending on the type of underlying investment and there are new start-up charges every year because you have to start a new plan.

But according to Mr Bolland, Peps often work out cheaper than pensions, partly because salesmen's commissions are lower on Peps. The key cost is the annual management charge, which can be as much as 1.5 per cent on some unit-trust Peps. You will probably also face an initial charge of 5 or 6 per cent, including salesman's commission. Over time, annual management charges in particular will erode small sums. Many companies will not accept contributions as low as £25 a month.

■ Pensions can carry big initial charges which may in some cases erode the whole of your investment in the early years of your savings. If you subsequently stop contributing, you will not be able to cash in your investment but will have to leave it or transfer it to another pension plan. Funds left in a plan will continue to attract charges.

The main attraction of pensions, particularly for higher-rate taxpayers, is that contributions currently attract tax relief at the highest rate. This, coupled with the tax-free growth of the investment, is meant to justify rules that compel people to spend roughly three quarters of their fund buying an annuity to give them a guaranteed income. An annuity is a gamble. If you buy when rates are poor you are stuck with a low income for life. If you die the year after you buy it, your pension fund dies with you.

Peps carry initial and con-

tinuing charges, unfortunately there is no right or wrong answer to how you should save for retirement. Much depends on your tax position, your other assets and your approach to investment risk.

But there are some basic ground rules, according to Mark Bolland of Chamberlain de Broe, the independent financial adviser.

■ Tax-exempt special savings accounts (Tessas) allow investments of up to £9,000 over five years with interest rolling up tax free if you do not touch the investment. But they are deposit accounts. They have the

those who value flexibility. First, you can take the fund before retirement if you need to. Secondly, you do not have to use the majority of your fund to buy an annuity as you do with a pension. You could blow it all on the day you retire or reinvest it for income where you please.

Each individual can put up to £9,000 a year into a Pep. Unlike pensions, the level of your contributions is not dictated by your salary and you do not have to be earning to make contributions, although taxpayers will be the ones to benefit from the relief.

Annuities take a knock, page 39

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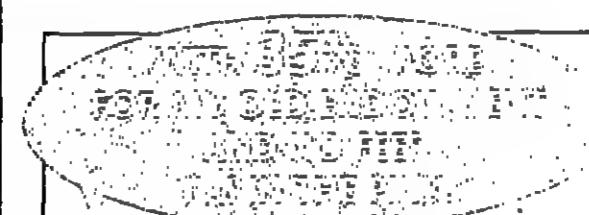
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A bouquet — and a brickbat for National Savings

From Mrs J. Edwards

Sir, I most heartily endorse Mr R. J. Hobdel's praise (Weekend Money Letters, April 19) of the National Savings staff at Durham. For more than 20 years, the staff there have dealt with many applications to reinvest, purchase or partly repay our savings certificates with great efficiency and a kindly, caring attitude to sorting out all our queries promptly, either by telephoning or by writing to us.

Our monthly budgeting would be impossible without a regular income from the repayment of one or other of the certificates and I am infinitely grateful to the staff for their excellent service.

Yours faithfully,
JANET EDWARDS,
18 Onslow Court,
Drayton Gardens, SW10.

From Mr C. S. Corcoran
Sir, In her article (Step by step saving, April 19) Karen Zagor says National Savings dropped the yearly bond scheme because there was not enough demand.

This was a scheme in which savers put aside £20 and £400 a month on terms where for a plan taken out in November 1992, for example, the tax-free rate of return over 5 years equalled 6.75 per cent compound; for the two following years it was 5.75 per cent and 5.85 per cent respectively — returns which bear favourable comparison with other National Savings schemes.

My understanding is that the Treasury considered the rates of interest too generous and stopped any further contributions; despite government expressions of intent that people should be encouraged to save for the future.

Yours faithfully,
C. S. CORCORAN,
25 Hyderthorpe Road, SW12.

WEEKEND MONEY LETTERS

Shabby treatment of service widows

TONY WHITE

From Mrs J. Green
Sir, Jenny Grove's excellent article (Service pension rules add to widow's distress, April 26) highlighted the problems faced by war and service widows. Our particular concern is that the occupational Armed Forces Family Pension should be for life, regardless of whether a widow remarries. Tom King as Defence Minister stated quite categorically that this was a contributory pension.

Recently one young service widow was initially refused a mortgage on the grounds that her pension (income) was not guaranteed. They said it was dependent on her remaining without a partner and she could not give that guarantee. It is quite wrong that those who lose a spouse while serving in the Forces should be denied the right to keep their occupational pension while rebuilding stable family units. Surely if it time to correct this anomaly?

Yours faithfully,
JENNY GREEN,
President,
RAF Widows' Association,
c/o 67 Portland Place, W1.



Still proud: war and service widows at their annual ceremony at the Cenotaph

If they remarried or cohabited. These ladies get a much smaller DSS pension, as their husbands paid into an occupational pension scheme. It seems very unfair that this occupational pension should stop for any reason. After all if their husband had worked for another employer they would in all probability have kept the pension for life. In this respect, we are treating our war widows less favourably than ordinary widows and that cannot be right. We are always delighted to welcome new members.

Yours faithfully,
IRENE BLOOR,
Public Relations Officer,
War Widows Association
of Great Britain,
1 Coach Lane,
Stanton in Peak,
Matlock, Derbyshire.

From Mrs L. Long
Sir, Your correspondents Mrs E. Marshall and Capt M. Dunlop are very lucky compared with me. I have been widowed 26 years and my husband's naval pension (after a lifetime of service in the Royal Navy) was cut off the day he died after an accident. His lifetime of service at sea did not count for anything. The date of our marriage was the controlling rule. I am over 80 now and have given up hope of anything.

Yours faithfully,
L. LONG,
Shobdon, Leominster,
Herefordshire.

From Mrs I. Bloo

Sir, The War Widows' Association of Great Britain with the support of others in the ex-service community has been successful over the years in campaigning for improved pensions and conditions for pre-1973 war widows.

The association is still campaigning for a pension for life for the young widows, who would lose their pension

forces pensions. In 1941, aged 19, I volunteered for the RAF. I reported for duty that September and ten months later qualified as a Sgt Pilot. I was a Warrant Officer when the war ended, commissioned in 1946, and retired as a Squadron Leader in 1971.

When calculating my pension my length of service was reduced. Only service after the age of 21 being included in the calculations. As a result, my pension was about one third of my final salary. I calculated that the Belgian officer's widow's pension would be higher than my total pension. And, of course, my widow will receive only one third of that.

I was proud to serve my country for nearly 30 years. What a pity that my country has no pride in the way it treats those who served it.

Yours faithfully,
A. GARRETT,
3 Hilly Fields,
Woodbridge, Suffolk.

M&G defends its investment criteria

From Mr M. McINTOCK

Sir, I refer to your editorial (Performance left wanting at M&G, April 26). It poses serious questions which demand a response. You refer to M&G's "misguided attachment to an investment strategy". M&G is, and will remain, well known as a value investor — meaning, in essence, a strategy of buying unfashionable and intrinsically cheap shares with good prospects that have been overlooked by the market. This strategy remains as valid today as it ever has and has been consistently proven to deliver above-average long-term returns.

We are a new management team — I only took over as group managing director in February this year — and it is

our job to make such changes to the business as we think are in our investors' interests. We are not in any way embarrassed to have plans to improve our day-to-day investment process and to clarify our funds' identities and objectives — no organisation is perfect, and we believe we can make a number of significant improvements to the way in which M&G conducts its business.

I profoundly disagree with your contention that M&G has been at fault in pursuing a value strategy "when this was clearly not in the interests of customers". You seem to suggest that fund managers should run around changing their investment strategy whenever they hit difficult short-term circumstances and by impli-

cation, that they should not promote products unless their recent record is good. Do you really believe this can be in the public's interest? Today's fashion is tomorrow's discard. I would have thought you would be pleased that there are fund managers around who have the courage to market what they believe in, even if it is unfashionable, rather than pandering to every short-term whim. The time to be investing is at the bottom of a cycle, such as that currently affecting the value style. Yours faithfully,

MICHAEL MCINTOCK,
Group Managing Director,
M&G Group Plc,
3 Minster Court,
Great Tower Street, EC3.

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The Times 10/5/97

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ADDRESS _____

Green credit card will biodegrade

Co-operative Bank aims to have replaced all its existing two million credit cards with eco-friendly, Bioplus by the year 2000. The bank's new biodegradable credit card was launched this week in association with Greenpeace and is made from a plastic produced from natural resources. Until now all credit cards have been made from PVC. The card has an interest rate of 15 per cent per month, 19.5 per cent APR. Call 0800 339922 for more details.

If you are still confused about self-assessment and worried about the severe penalties for late completion, a computer package produced by Which? Software will take the pain out of the process. TaxCalc 1996-97 calculates how much tax you should be paying and how much the Inland Revenue may owe you. The package which is IBM compatible, features Inland Revenue tax advice leaflets and includes more than 40 tax-saving tips. TaxCalc costs £29.99 and is available by calling 0800 252100.

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GUARANTEED INCOME BONDS			
ANNUAL INCOME Rates as at May 8, 1997			
Investment (£)	Company	Standard Rate (%)	
1 Year			
1,000	Hambro Assured	4.40	
5,000	GE Financial Assur	5.90	
20,000	GE Financial Assur	6.05	
50,000	GE Financial Assur	6.15	
2 Years			
1,000	Hambro Assured	5.05	
5,000	GE Financial Assur	6.15	
20,000	GE Financial Assur	6.25	
50,000	GE Financial Assur	6.35	
3 Years			
1,000	Hambro Assured	5.45	
5,000	GE Financial Assur	5.53	
20,000	GE Financial Assur	6.63	
50,000	GE Financial Assur	6.73	
4 Years			
1,000	Hambro Assured	5.90	
5,000	GE Financial Assur	6.71	
20,000	GE Financial Assur	6.81	
50,000	GE Financial Assur	6.91	
5 Years			
1,000	Hambro Assured	5.85	
3,000	ITT London & Edin	7.00	
10,000	GE Financial Assur	7.30	

Source Chamberlain de Broi 0171-344 4222. Net rates. Income and capital guaranteed. Early surrender. Terms vary. Monthly income may be available.



SAVERS' BEST BUYS

INSTANT ACCESS ACCOUNTS	Account	Notice of term	Deposit	Rate	Interest paid
Sainsbury's Bank 05000 405060	Instant Access	Instant	£1	5.75	Y/y
Nationwide BS 0500 302010	Invest Direct	Postal	£500	6.40	Y/y
Northern Rock BS 0500 505000	Select Instant	Postal	£5,000	6.35	Y/y
Nationwide BS 0500 302010	Invest Direct	Postal	£10,000	6.45	Y/y

NOTICE ACCOUNTS & BONDS	Account	Notice of term	Deposit	Rate	Interest paid
Nottingham BS 0515 9564422	Postal Plus	30 day p	£2,500	6.40	Y/y
Northern Rock BS 0500 505000	Select 60	60 day p	£25,000	6.70	Y/y
Scarborough BS 01723 500616	Scarborough 100	100 day	£1,000	6.30	Y/y
Leopold Joseph 0171 588 2223	100 Day Notices	100 day	£10,000	6.54	Y/y

FIRST TESSAS (TAX FREE)	Account	Notice of term	Deposit	Rate	Interest paid
Sun Banking Corp 01438 744505	Fixd+feeder s/c	5 year	£8,575	7.55	F/M/y
Bank of Ireland (GB) 0800 971971	Fixd+feeder opt	5 year	£8,000	7.50	F/M/y
West Bromwich BS 0390 143688	5 year	£8,000	7.00	Y/y	
Monmouthshire BS 01633 840454	5 year	£1,000	7.00	Y/y	

VISA	CREDIT CARDS BEST BUYS
RBS Advanta 0800 077770	Visa
Capital One Bank 0800 669000	Visa
Co-operative BS 0800 109000	Advantage Visa

CREDIT CARDS	Card type	Interest per month	APR%	Fee per annum
RBS Advanta 0800 077770	Visa	0.795%	8.90%	N/I
Capital One Bank 0800 669000	Visa	0.795%	9.90%	N/I
Co-operative BS 0800 109000	Advantage Visa	0.875%	10.80%	N/I

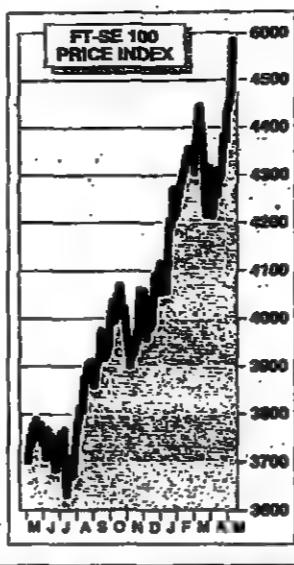
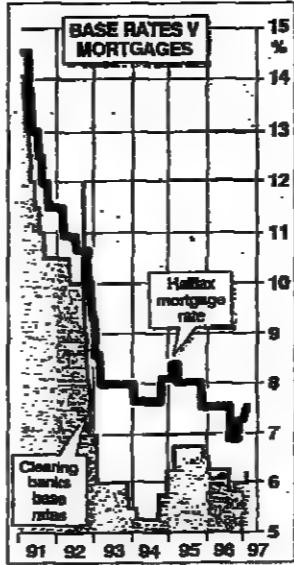
PERSONAL LOANS	APR	Monthly payment on £3,000 for Syrs with insurance
Northern Rock BS 0345 421421	11.90% ^{bh}	£112.82
Coutts & Co via local branch	12.60% ^{bh}	N/A
Lombard Direct 0800 215000	13.90% ^a	£120.02

N.B. A = APR dependent on credit rating, B = Withdrawals via Bank Clearing System, C = no interest free period, F = Fixed Rate, H = High rate applies if insurance not arranged, L = Lender's cheque account required, N = introductory rate for a limited period, P = By Post only
*** RATES SHOWN ARE GROSS AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE**
PLEASE CHECK RATES BEFORE INVESTING

Source: MoneyFacts, the Monthy Guide to Investment & Mortgage Rates (01622 500 677)

Statistics compiled by Lizzane Rose

PI-SE 100 PRICE INDEX



Source: Annual Decr (0171 588 0583)

NATIONAL SAVINGS

Gross rate	At 5% rates	Minimum investment	Notice	Contact	
1.50	1.20	0.90	10-10,000*	0645 645000	
4.75	3.80	2.85	20-500**	0645 645000	
8.00	4.80	3,602,000-25,000**	3mth	0645 645000	
8.00	4.80	3,601,000-20,000**	0645 645000		
7.75	—	100-10,000	8day	0645 645000	
7.75	—	25-1,000	1mth	0645 645000	
3.51	—	100-25,000	8day	0645 645000	
6.85	5.32	3,98	100-250,000	8day	0645 645000
—	2.50	100-10,000	8day	0645 645000	
—	5.00	500-50,000	8day	0645 645000	

* first £70 (140) of net tax free, net access for up to £100. ** Unltd addition of hols for re-invested proceeds. Tax free - guaranteed value. * Value when held for 5 years. ** 102.4% net bonus for 2000-01 + 102.0% bonus if held for 5 years. * Taxable but cred in full. ** 102.4% net bonus if held for 5 years. ** Taxed rates apply.

PENSION ANNUITIES

Male: Age 60	Age 65	Age 70
Standard Lf	£9,776	£10,844
Equitable Lf	£9,905	£12,027
Stewart	£9,731	£10,782
Norwich Union	£9,578	£11,980
Canada Lf	£9,502	£12,055

Female: Age 60	Age 65	Age 70
Norwich Union	£9,078	£10,910
Standard Lf	£9,816	£10,596
Equitable Lf	£9,958	£10,817
Canada Life	£6,800	£10,804
Standard Lf	£9,756	£10,724

JOINT LIFE / 2/3 WIDOWS (level annuity)	Male: Age 60	Age 65	Age 70

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Clare Stewart explains why car insurance quotes vary so much

Going for Golf



Golf star: Paula Hamilton's stylish rejection of her man and her fur but not her Golf boosted the hatchback's sales

Anyone who has renewed or taken out car insurance recently and telephoned a handful of insurers picked at random from Yellow Pages, may have been surprised by the wide spread of premiums on offer. One reader of *The Times*, for example, reports quotes ranging from £159 to £411 for a policy to cover a new car while last week my own research among a dozen insurance companies and brokers produced premiums varying from £175 to £254 (see below). All of which is good news if it means that shopping around results in big savings. But why is there such a difference?

No one is surprised that it is cheaper to insure an Austin Allegro in Little Snoring than a Ferrari in inner London, but such a spread of premium for the same risk prompts slower examination. It also raises the question of what you get for your money. Inevitably there is no simple answer.

The range of prices quoted reflects supply and demand say some insurers. Certainly the competitiveness of the market is made clear by the eagerness of some insurers to cut premiums instantly if you give them a price to beat.

The difficulty for the car owner is to know which insurer is most interested in their business and therefore able to offer the best package of both cover and service in the event of you making a claim. In some instances making the match is relatively easy where insurers set out their stalls to attract a very specific category of drivers such as classic car enthusiasts or people with performance cars.

For Ms average, going through a broker rather than phoning round a selection of companies, may provide the quickest answer. A good broker, says Eamonn Brown, chairman of the motor panel of BIBA (British Insurance and Investment

Brokers Association), can advise people on a range of options, drawing on their knowledge of the insurance market and of the client's precise needs.

In spite of the success of the direct insurers which first appeared in the late 1980s, there has been a trend back towards brokers, says Mr Brown. Not surprisingly brokers are keen to challenge the belief that going direct is automatically the cheapest option or indeed that price alone should be the deciding factor in choosing your insurer. If you select an insurance package through a broker or other intermediary it will include a commission element typically about 10-12 per cent, but says Mr Brown, brokers are directly competitive with direct insurers.

In theory, while intermediaries have access to a wide range of insurance options, in practice many put much of their business through a relatively small number of companies and are therefore able to take advantage of discounts offered on a certain volume of business.

The direct approach to selling insurance made its mark with companies such as Direct Line promoting themselves on the basis of low overheads and no middlemen equalling low premiums for customers.

But direct insurers have significant overheads such as advertising costs to meet and the newer companies are now being squeezed by the build-up of claims, the decline in car premium levels over the past few years and the increasing number of personal injury claims now being pursued, covering problems such as whiplash as a result of an accident.

Direct Line, with more than two million policyholders, and one of the largest companies in the private insurance market, last year saw its profits fall sharply.

from £112 million to £26.5 million in the year to September. The group, part of the Royal Bank of Scotland, blamed growing claims and competition.

Confusingly there is a degree of overlap between the different companies offering insurance. Large insurance groups may have their own direct business, also sell through brokers and other agents, and have subsidiaries acting as insurance agents for a range of insurers. The AA acts as an intermediary with 13 insurance companies on its books but this summer is also planning to set up its own direct insurance company in a joint venture with Eagle Star, which will target AA members. To add to the problem insurance companies and intermediaries are all lumped together in Yellow Pages as "insurance agents".

The distinction between brokers and agents is also often blurred as many offer a similar service. Brokers are registered under the 1977 Brokers Registration Act and are bound by a code of conduct, while agents and other intermediaries do not have an equivalent governing body though conform to the Association of British Insurers code of conduct. The outlook for car insurance premiums continues to be variable and more unsettled than in recent years. The fierce competition in the past two years has seen some insurers cut premiums to the bone to hold market share.

Rates hit the bottom of the cycle last year and are now rising. Last month, insurance premium tax rose from 2.5 to 4 per cent and, even excluding this increase, according to the AA's quarterly British Insurance Premium Index average comprehensive car premiums have risen 2.5 per cent since January and are forecast to rise 8-10 per cent this year.

- Admiral: £250.07 — £120 excess for fire and theft, £360 excess for accidents. Legal protection, courtesy car, 24-hour roadside helpline and personal accident benefit.
- Royal Insurance: £254 — £100 excess for fire and theft, £100 for accidental damage. Includes Green Flag membership, legal protection and courtesy car.

■ Direct Line: £236.08 — no excess for fire and theft, £100 for accidental damage. Legal cover but no courtesy car.

How the insurer reaches his price

In explaining price differences, insurers use the analogy of choosing budget own-label products in a supermarket as opposed to a premium branded product, although cheaper policies sometimes appear to offer more.

But, said Mike Jones, head of group corporate affairs for Royal Sun Alliance, "you cannot underestimate the costs of different cover added on by insurers."

These might include cover for driving abroad, use of a courtesy car if your own is off the road after an accident or access to a 24-hour helpline. Such details may be standard on some policies, added extras on others, so it is worth checking the small print to find out exactly what different policies offer.

There is also the attitude of each insurer to risks. "Each company will have a different view based on its experience," added Mr Jones. When calculating a premium, each insurer will have its own view on risks associated with different types of car and the age and history of the driver. The insurer will also look at how premium income is weighed against the company's past history of claims and expectations of future claims.

The premium you are quoted will further depend on how well your risk sits with the insurer's view of its target market. "Increasingly companies are more choosy about the type of business they attract," said David Ross, of Guardian Insurance.

In a competitive market with slim profit margins, the trend has been for insurers to carve their own niche by targeting the more specialised areas, such as young, older, or lady drivers. So you may be quoted a high premium because you do not fit an insurer's target market and it is pricing itself out of the running.

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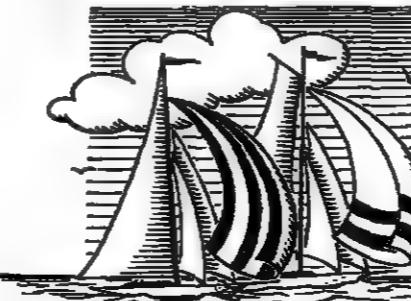
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£25,000 +	6.55%	0.38%	6.55%
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Date of Birth _____

Name (Mr/Ms/Ms) _____

Address _____

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Date of Birth _____

Name (Mr/Ms/Ms) _____

Address _____

Tel. (Office) _____ Postcode _____

Tel. (Home) _____ Postcode _____

Date of Birth _____

Name (Mr/Ms/Ms) _____

Address _____

Tel. (Office) _____ Postcode _____

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Date of Birth _____

Name (Mr/Ms/Ms) _____

Address _____

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UK Growth Fund	333.50	351.30	+ 18.70	2.27												
Hedge Fund Acc	94.00	94.00	+ 0.00	2.27												
Higher Fund Acc	94.20	94.20	+ 0.00	2.27												
High Fund Acc	22.50	22.50	+ 0.00	2.27												
High Fund Acc	22.50	22.50	+ 0.00	2.27												
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North America	10.90	10.90	+ 0.00	2.27												
Europe	41.90	41.90	+ 0.00	2.27												
East Europe	10.90	10.90	+ 0.00	2.27												
Investment Acc	12.40	12.40	+ 0.00	2.27												
Real Estate Acc	8.80	8.80	+ 0.00	2.27												
Private Equity Acc	10.80	10.80	+ 0.00	2.27												
Global Equity Acc	10.80	10.80	+ 0.00	2.27												
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RACING: FRENCH CLASSICS PRODUCE MEAGRE ENTRY AT LONGCHAMP TOMORROW



Yalajetane, the Greenham Stakes winner, is among five British contenders for the French 2,000 Guineas at Longchamp tomorrow

Daylami can repel strong raiding party

FROM LIZ PRICE IN PARIS

THE Dubai Poule d'Essai des Poulaumes and the Pouliches (two French Guineas) at Longchamp tomorrow have a disappointing turnout with just seven runners in each event. While the two classics look more like the English Guineas, with more than half of the runners British-trained.

In the Poule d'Essai des Poulaumes, the British raiders look to have more than a fair chance of beating the French opposition. The Clive Brittain-trained Fantastic Fellow, who won his trial, the Prix Djebel, last month, is expected to put up a bold show. "Fantastic Fellow has improved since his last race," Brittain said. "John Reid came down on Saturday and was very happy with the horse's condition. He has a good turn of foot so it doesn't matter where he is put in the race."

Another serious contender is Yalajetane, trained by Michael Stoute, who beat

Revoque in the Greenham Stakes and will appreciate the soft ground. The Godolphin-owned Bahamian Bound is hoping to get a better run here than he did in the Dewhurst Stakes at Newmarket, where he finished fourth.

On form he is definitely a threat, having already beaten Zamindar and Fantasy Fellow last term. Nevertheless, this can go to the Aga Khan's Daylami, who won the Prix de Fontainebleau impressively two weeks ago. This likeable colt is an entry for the Derby at Epsom and should not be underestimated.

Criquette Head is seeking revenge with Always Loyal in the Dubai Poule d'Essai des Pouliches, having lost out in the 1,000 Guineas with Pas De Reponse. But she is facing tough competition as five English-trained fillies are in opposition.

For Ian Balding-trained Seize, second in the Fred

Darling Stakes, must be re-

spected, while Red Camelia

and the two Godolphin horses, Nightbird and Star Profile,

will be making their seasonal

reappearance after showing

useful form last year. Peter Chapple-Hyam saddles

Dances With Dreams. The

Manton trainer said: "We are

thitting at windmills in this

race, but she will appreciate

the soft ground."

Although there are only two

French fillies competing, they

can dominate the finish with

Always Loyal taken to confirm

her narrow course and dis-

tance victory over Mousse

Glace.

Only five runners line up

for the third group one race

of the day, the Prix Lupin. In

the absence of any British

contenders, the Andre Fabre-

trained Cloudingshould be

hard to beat. He has already

beaten Astarabab and the soft

ground will be to his

advantage.

Cloudingshould be to his

advantage.

CRICKET: ENGLAND COLLEAGUES DEMONSTRATE THEIR ALL-ROUND SKILLS ON DAY OF BRISK ACTIVITY

Gough's verve countered by Croft's craft

By ALAN LEE
CRICKET CORRESPONDENT

HEADINGLEY (third day of four): Glamorgan, with all second-innings wickets in hand, are 163 runs ahead of Yorkshire

DARREN GOUGH and Robert Croft are inseparable on the England winter tour — kindred spirits, sharing a noisy exuberance that led the coach, David Lloyd, to label them affectionately “the children”. They are central to England’s Ashes strategy this summer, too, but yesterday they took lead roles as opponents on a day of rich entertainment at Headingley.

This match entered its third day with only one wicket down. Glamorgan’s batsmen having dominated the 66 overs possible between the deluges on Wednesday before a blank Thursday had, by all logic, severely reduced the possible outcomes.

But apparently not. By lunchtime, eight more wickets had fallen, five of

them to Gough in one of those inspired spells he bowls with chest puffed out, cheeks reddening with effort and that irresistible look in his eyes. Only Croft defied him for long. Batting at No 6, as he must to be considered a Test-match all-rounder, he stayed two hours for 57 as Glamorgan were bowled out for 336.

Yorkshire responded positively, keen to establish their title credentials, but their batting was too frenetic. When Croft, settling in at the football stand end, took his second wicket, they were 130 for six, 57 short of avoiding the follow-on.

Gough, grumbling good-naturedly as bowlers like to do when the batsmen have let them down, all but banished that disagreeable prospect with a dashing 27. As is his wont, however, runs went to his head. Croft, whose cricket, unlike that of his friend, does not forever mirror the effervescence of his nature, lured him out and Yorkshire then had to weather an uncomfortable confrontation with Waqar Younis before

attaining a safer haven and declaring before the delayed close.

Gough was indignantly swift to deny that there was any legacy of dampness in the pitch to help him and nor was there any extravagant swing. The ball turned slowly, enough for Croft to fancy his chances of winning the game today, but the clatter of wickets could almost entirely be credited to careless batting.

Adrian Dale, the first of the day’s 17 casualties, can be excused. He received a beauty from Gough, leaving him sufficiently to induce a twitch of the bat and an edge to Blakely. This ended a second-wicket stand of 139 and Glamorgan were now to lose seven wickets for 27.

Gough twice went past Matthew Maynard’s outside edge before the Glamorgan captain escaped to the other end and promptly edged Silverwood to the right of second slip, where Byas took a sharp catch. Steve James, flawless during his 109, was then thrown out by Vaughan, from backward point, as he called Cottey

for a sharp single. Cottey was ebbed away from Glamorgan and, when the total reached 250, Gough snatched it for himself.

Three wickets fell on that score, Cottey caught behind as he flapped at a short one and Butcher and Shaw, failing in their footwork, leg-before to successive balls. Thomas avoided the hat-trick but then sliced a drive to guilty to complete Gough’s wicket-to-wicket analysis of five for 11.

So one England player, at least, is on top of his game. No, make that a two. Croft has been feted as a celebrity since returning to Wales from his highly successful first senior tour but it has not altered him one bit. Nor, more importantly, has it deflected him from his cricket. He batted here with studied intent, occasionally in trouble as he planted his back foot prematurely but vividly determined not to get out to Gough. Croft and Steve Watkinson generalized 51 for the last wicket and Croft had just struck Stern over the football stand when, in trying to repeat the

stroke, he was stumped. For many of those present, this ushered on the main event as Waqar marked out his run for his first championship spell for Glamorgan.

It was all something of a disappointment, though doubtless not for Yorkshire. Waqar’s efforts to make the ball swing away were fruitless and he bowled a sequence of innocuous balls down the leg side.

McGrath, having flicked two of them tidily for four, was unlucky to make thin contact with a third and departed as Shaw brought off a tumbling catch. Despite a much improved second spell from the Kirkstall Lane End, this was to be Waqar’s only success.

Darren Lehmann, the game’s other overseas player, made a typically bristling 54. 48 of them in thumping fours, but Yorkshire were losing wickets too quickly. Croft had taken one with his first ball, took another with his first after tea and finished with four, a tally he will look at least to double today.

HUGH ROUTLEDGE

Speak puts Durham on course for rare triumph

By IVO TENNANT

HARTLEPOOL (third day of four): Nottinghamshire, with eight second-innings wickets in hand, are 93 runs behind Durham

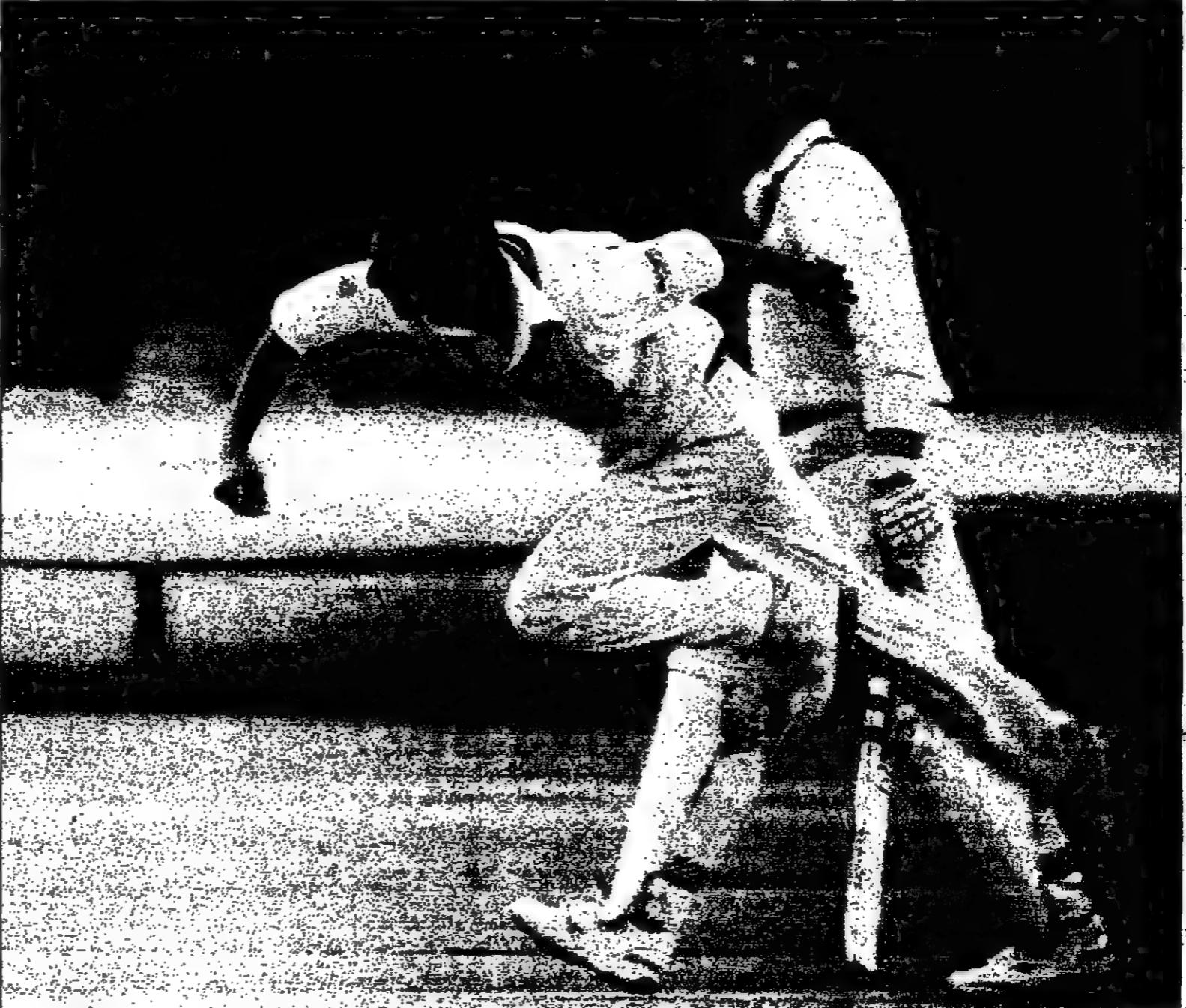
TODAY. Durham might just win a championship match. If they do, it will be the first time since 1995 and will come about not through an ill-judged declaration or any kind of joke cricket, but on merit. Nick Speak and David Boon, neither of whom can be associated with the county’s failings in past years, made sufficient runs to earn a first-innings lead of 161, and that, for Durham, is riches indeed. Now they must account for Nottinghamshire’s eight remaining wickets.

Having bowled out their opponents for 170 on the first day, they were held up when play was washed out on Thursday. Nottinghamshire’s time will come again — or at least it will if they can persuade somebody like Clive Rice to return and energise them — but Durham, like Middlesbrough’s footballers tomorrow, need plenty of luck.

They resumed yesterday 55 runs behind Nottinghamshire, with seven first-innings wickets in hand. Nothing seemed more likely than that Boon would make his first century for his adopted county, after a half-century against Oxford University and an unbeaten 85 against Lancashire. His autobiography, newly published, will have to be updated if he can imbue his players with a sense of self.

He collected runs off his legs assiduously and was not deterred from driving when Bowen or Franks dropped short of a length. It was a surprise when, in the first over of spin, he was taken at silly point off bat and pad. Bates, with his off breaks, was preferred here to the two left-armers, Afford and Hindson, and he bowled them most frugally.

Nobody is likely to benefit



Mohammad Akram, who ended with five wickets, and the batsman, Rose, who scored a century, were key figures at Northampton

Rose and Burns lead Somerset recovery

By PAT GIBSON

NORTHAMPTON (third day of four): Northamptonshire, with seven second-innings wickets in hand, are one run behind Somerset

JOHN EMBUREY was not planning to shoot a horror movie when he took up his position behind the bowler’s arm with one of those video cameras that have become such an essential tool of the cricket coach’s trade. Yet that is what it will look like to his Northamptonshire players if they ever summon up the courage to analyse the events of yesterday.

He did manage a few happy snaps in the morning, when Mohammad Akram and Paul Taylor were reducing Somerset to 73 for seven, but there were some harrowing

scenes afterwards as Michael Burns and Graham Rose put on 170 for the eighth wicket.

Burns, an all-purpose cricketer who followed Dermot Reeve, the new Somerset coach, from Edgbaston to Taunton, made 82, one run more than his previous highest score, while Rose was still undefeated on 109, his seventh first-class century, when Somerset were finally out for 290. Their last three wickets had all gone.

There was no obvious explanation for the remarkable turnaround, apart from the fact that the pitch may have lost some of its juice. It was just another example of what can happen in this extraordinary game when a couple of dropped catches here, a few bits of luck there, hand the initiative to the batsmen.

After that, the edges did not even go to hand. In one over from Akram, Rose twice flashed attempted hooks over the wicketkeeper’s head, the first one going for four, the second for six.

Thus encouraged, Burns and Rose prospered. Burns began to play the shots of a genuine batsman and Rose laid about him with some abandon, particularly against Bowler.

They had been together for 41 overs and were within two runs of Somerset’s eighth-wicket record — established by the rather more formidable pairing of Richards and Botham in 1983 — when Burns top-edged a sweep against Snape.

Mushtaq soon sliced a drive to cover to give Bowler some consolation, but there was still time for more North-

amptonshire suffering. Rose had just completed his century off 136 balls with 12 fours and a six when Capel dropped him again, off Bowler, and Shine had helped him add a further 37 for the last wicket by the time Akram came back to claim his fifth wicket.

So Northamptonshire found themselves going in again 105 runs behind and they were quickly in further trouble. Lye, who was forced to change his bat because the protective covering was roughing up the ball, found the replacement, borrowed from the opposing captain, too much to his liking when he was beautifully caught at cover. Bailey was lost before Capel and Turner was yorked by Caddick, before Montgomerie and Pemberthy got together in an unbroken stand of 39.

Speaks benefits

more from batting with Boon this season than Speak, who left Lancashire because he was not given enough first-team opportunities. There have been any number of cricketers who have joined Durham too late in their careers to make a proper impression, but he should not be one of them.

Now 30, he has a career average of nearly 40.

He should have made a century here. In all probability he would have done had he refused Brown’s call for a risky run when on 93. Initially he had turned his back on his partner, which gave him insufficient time to beat Bowler’s throw. His innings came off 254 balls and included 12 fours.

Other than that, there were contributions from Speight, who is keen to build a reputation as a more responsible batsman, and Brown himself. Tolley took two wickets in successive balls when he had Foster leg-before, not properly forward, and Boiling caught at the wicket flicking, airy outside off stump. Durham merited their considerable lead.

What they still have to resolve this season is how to find enough support for Brown if their opponents are to be bowled out twice. Walker might have been handed the new ball, given that he had taken seven Nottinghamshire first-innings wickets on Wednesday, but instead Killean lost his rhythm, spraying down the leg side too often. He did take the wicket of Pollard, but that owed everything to a brilliant left-handed catch by Boiling in the gully.

Soon, Robinson was collecting runs as he has done unobtrusively and often, unerringly for nearly 20 years. Last year, Durham made Nottinghamshire follow on and he came up with an innings of 184 to save the match. He remains in the middle to attempt to do so again. One further wicket fell just before the close. Boiling having Archer leg-before pushing half-forward.

Peters gives repeat performance

By RICHARD HOBSON

FENNER’S (final day of three): Cambridge University drew with Essex

MEN against boys is an expression frequently used to describe contests between the Universities and first-class opposition. Yesterday, though, Cambridge suffered at the hands of a player whose boyish appearance suggested that he could have been one of their own.

Stephen Peters, at 18, is thought within certain Essex circles to be a better batsman than either Gooch or Hussain at a similar age. While it would be folly to read too much into a single innings against the Cambridge attack, he clearly possesses potential in abundance.

In this same fixture last season he became the youngest Englishman to score a century on debut. He completed another hundred yesterday

in 95 minutes, dragging the game out of the torpor into which it had sunk in the opening session.

Essex did not deserve victory. Indeed, as they ground out 34 runs in the first hour, it was apparent that success ranked below practice on their list of priorities.

Peters began uncertainly, but, unlike Hibbert, his predecessor, he declined to prod and poke about for long. He attacked the off spin of Freeth and Rob Jones and, by the time the new ball was taken, he was close to outright domination. His second fifty came from just 35 balls.

This vigorous innings allowed Prichard to declare with a first-innings lead of 18. Cambridge unwisely shuttled their batting order and eventually had to call upon Smith, their leading batsman, to appear at No 8 and steer them through the final minutes alongside Hughes, who had relished the opportunity of

wicket. At last, Napier could feel he was in the Essex side for a reason. Like Wilson, he was making his debut but was mysteriously overlooked in the first innings.

A bowler of medium pace, Napier gave up a chance to join Ipswich Town as a goal-keeper to dedicate himself to cricket, a brave decision in an era in which football can lead on to fame and fortune and bowling leads invariably to back problems.

Napier soon claimed a second wicket as Steffan Jones swung at a leg-side delivery and was adjudged to have edged the ball to Hyam, the wicketkeeper, who had held a more difficult chance to account for Ratledge, one of two wickets for Such.

Dawson was bowled on the back foot and it said much for the ambition of the visitors that Essex agreed to finish at 530, with just four student wickets intact and a possible ten overs remaining.

occupying Smith’s regular opening position.

Essex took wickets regularly and, for the second time in the day, youthful exuberance came to the fore. Having been tossed the new ball, Wilson bowled House in his first over. Rob Jones fell pushing nervously at Andrew and a complete surrender seemed possible when Singh drove Napier to Wilson at mid-

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CRICKET: SHAMEFUL SUSSEX FAIL TO PREVENT MIDDLESEX'S MARCH TOWARDS VICTORY

Highlights provided by mash of the day

By MICHAEL HENDERSON

LORD'S (third day of four): Sussex, with all second-innings wickets in hand, need 297 runs to avoid an innings defeat by Middlesex.

SPECTATORS have had their money's worth this week. The bangers and mash at Crocker's Folly have been grand. For a fiver you can have four sausages from a long list that features wild boar and apple, pork and leek and, of course, Cumberland. The onion gravy is excellent and the mustard will give your olfactory receptors a thorough work-out. It's a long way from the "Inter-City Sizzler".

At Lord's, where Sussex have very kindly kept Middlesex company these past three days (there was some odd talk in the Long Room of a match taking place), the menu has been slightly different. Diners have savoured:

- Stuffed Martlet.
- Greenfield Salad.
- Terrine of Duck.
- Grilled Trout Barclay.
- Rabbit Pie ("Hi, I'm Mark Robinson and I'm your waiter today").
- Hard cheese.

Not unusually it has left an unpleasant taste in the mouth.

If Sussex carry on playing cricket like this the England and Wales Cricket Board will feel obliged to diminish the points value of a win against them. To avoid defeat in this rain-affected game, which lost another 63 overs yesterday, they must bat through the final day, after following-on 303 runs behind. They do not deserve a draw but, if they apply their minds, they can still achieve one.

Can they apply themselves?

That was the task yesterday and they hunked it so wrenchingly they were bowled out for 187. Bill Athey, 39 years young, finished with 60 not out and there were runs down the order from Paul Jarvis, who was dropped before he had scored, and Anwar Khan, to go with his five wickets. The others should hold their heads in shame.



Gutting clings on to a chance offered by Drakes to the obvious delight of his team-mates in the Middlesex slip cordon. Photograph: Graham Morris

Jamie Hewitt, who took four for 60, the best figures of his career, was the most successful of the Middlesex bowlers. He took the new ball ahead of Richard Johnson, who is still searching for full fitness, and who will be gratified by the three wickets that he took.

There were a couple for Jacques Kallis, the South African all-rounder, and, when he thought his day would go unrewarded, there was a late one for Angus Fraser.

Kallis may be only 21 but he is clearly going to be a key

man in the Middlesex team this season. Mike Gatting, his captain, rates him highly as a fast-medium bowler no less than a stroke-playing batsman, and talk of him bowling only on Sundays is just that talk.

Mention to Gatting the Sunday-only "verbal clause" that Ali Butcher was supposed to have inserted in Kallis's contract and you will get a very funny look. He's going to surprise a few people this summer.

Sussex lost their first three

wickets for 31 on Thursday. Within an hour yesterday morning they had slipped to 74 for six as Johnson flattened Rao's middle stump. Drakes offered a strop catch to Gatting and Newell, who scored a century against Northamptonshire at Hove last week, was leg-before. To make 187, therefore, was quite a triumph.

The sub-plot of the innings was whether Fraser could contain his frustration. He was not altogether in the groove, but he did bowl some

good balls and he deserved better than to see Hewitt malingering at long leg, put down a straightforward chance when Jarvis accepted the bait of a short-pitched ball with a top-edged hook.

Fraser's day was made more or less complete when he was taken off, and, with the next ball from the Pavilion End, Johnson took the wicket of Jarvis, who checked a drive to cover.

Dear old Gussie lumbered up to join the celebratory throng with a brow black as

thunder. He gave the bowler a pat but what he really wanted to say was: "Oh! Those are my wickets you're taking."

People have been kind to Sussex of late, sympathetic to the bizarre proceedings that led to the takeover of the club committee. It was thought that they might actually prosper from the winter blood-letting; that they might not be "all that bad". In this match they have played like boobies and, if they carry on like this much longer, they will end up with no friends at all.

YESTERDAY'S SCOREBOARDS

Britannic Assurance county championship

Derbyshire v Surrey

DERBY third day of four. Derbyshire, with eight second-innings wickets in hand, are 154 runs behind Surrey.

Surrey: First Innings

D J Sibson	c Bowler b Malcolm	4
M A Butcher	b Bowler	12
T J Stevens	b Bowler	83
G P Thorpe	b Clarke	33
N Shahid	b Home	6
A P Caddick	b Home	23
C C Lewis	c Home b Malcolm	7
M J Butcher	c Adams b Dean	17
A J Adams	b Adams	1
J E Barnes	not out	1
Extras (b 2, lb 3, w 2, nb 2)		15
Total (75.5 overs)		267

FALL OF WICKETS 1-4, 2-12, 3-16, 4-80, 5-17, 6-130, 7-134, 8-208, 9-256

BOWLING: Malcolm 21-95-4, DeFreitas 21-92-4, Dean 21-94-1, Daan 21-94-1, Clarke 10-44-1.

Derbyshire: First Innings

A S Redfern	c Lewis b M P Becknell	25
G A Khan	not out	14
C J Adams	b Bowler	14
D M Jones	not out	36
Extras (b 2, lb 2, w 2)		28
Total (22.5 overs)		112

FALL OF WICKETS 1-1, 2-21, 3-21, 4-21, 5-33, 6-44, 7-48, 8-69

BOWLING: M P Becknell 8-138-2, Lewis 12-25-2, Tudor 2-20-30, Hollands 3-21-2, Benjamin 5-3-50, Salter 2-1-2.

Bonus points: Derbyshire 4 Surrey 2

Umpires: A A Jones and B Duckleton

Worcestershire v Leicestershire

WORCESTER third day of four. Leicestershire, with six second-innings wickets in hand, need 47 runs to avoid an innings defeat by Worcestershire 257 (K R Spring 55, A D Muley 40).

Leicestershire: First Innings

J L Smith	c Wickes b Shrewsbury	20
J A Hobbs	c Wickes b Newport	3
J Wells	c Rhodes b Newport	0
N C Johnson	b Newport	18
G M Sherriff	c Shrewsbury	1
P M Morris	c Shrewsbury	7
J M Dakin	b Shrewsbury	0
D J Mills	b Shrewsbury	0
M T Brimacombe	c Middx b Newport	0
Extras (b 8)		5
Total (23.2 overs)		263

FALL OF WICKETS 1-13, 2-21, 3-21, 4-21, 5-33, 6-44, 7-48, 8-69

BOWLING: Newport 17-2-57-2, Shrewsbury 10-2-57-2

Second Innings

D I Madry	c Wickes b Chapman	38
J L Sutcliffe	c Wickes b Chapman	5
A Handic	c Rhodes b Haynes	5
N C Johnson	not out	87
G M Sherriff	c Wickes b Haynes	0
P M Morris	c Wickes b Haynes	0
J M Dakin	c Wickes b Haynes	0
D J Mills	c Wickes b Haynes	0
M T Brimacombe	c Wickes b Haynes	0
Extras (b 8)		10
Total (23.2 overs)		263

FALL OF WICKETS 1-13, 2-21, 3-21, 4-21, 5-33, 6-44, 7-48, 8-69

BOWLING: Newport 17-2-57-2, Shrewsbury 10-2-57-2

Nottinghamshire v Nottinghamshire

HARTEPOOL third day of four. Nottinghamshire, with eight second-innings wickets in hand, are 93 runs behind Durham.

Nottinghamshire: First Innings

C M Tolley	54, A Walker 7 for 561.	170
Second Innings		1
P R Pollard	c Bowler b Julian	5
P T Rosewell	not out	23
D J Treadaway	c Bowler b Julian	23
M J Bowler	not out	1
Extras (b 2)		4
Total (22.5 overs)		261

FALL OF WICKETS 1-11, 2-80

BOWLING: Brown 8-27-0, Miller 7-15-1, Walker 5-2-23-0, Boiling 5-3-21, Boon 1-0-0.

Durham v Nottinghamshire

HARTEPOOL third day of four. Nottinghamshire, with eight second-innings wickets in hand, are 93 runs behind Durham.

Nottinghamshire: Second Innings

J B Lewis	b Bowler	25
A Cale	c Bowler b Silverwood	55
A Dale	c Bowler b Silverwood	44
P A Clegg	c Bowler b Silverwood	3
F D Croft	c Bowler b Shrewsbury	5
G P Butcher	b Bowler	0
D J Shaw	b Bowler	0
V M Young	c Bowler b Silverwood	10
S L Watson	not out	18
Extras (b 2, lb 12, w 12, nb 10)		35
Total (102.4 overs)		336

Score at 120 overs: 330-9.

FALL OF WICKETS 1-18, 2-68, 3-105, 4-183, 5-265, 6-281, 7-314, 8-334, 9-332, 10-331, 11-331, 12-332, 13-332, 14-332, 15-332, 16-332, 17-332, 18-332, 19-332, 20-332, 21-332, 22-332, 23-332, 24-332, 25-332, 26-332, 27-332, 28-332, 29-332, 30-332, 31-332, 32-332, 33-332, 34-332, 35-332, 36-332, 37-332, 38-332, 39-332, 40-332, 41-332, 42-332, 43-332, 44-332, 45-332, 46-332, 47-332, 48-332, 49-332, 50-332, 51-332, 52-332, 53-332, 54-332, 55-332, 56-332, 57-332, 58-332, 59-332, 60-332, 61-332, 62-332, 63-332, 64-332, 65-332, 66-332, 67-332, 68-332, 69-332, 70-332, 71-332, 72-332, 73-332, 74-332, 75-332, 76-332, 77-332, 78-332, 79-332, 80-332, 81-332, 82-332, 83-332, 84-332, 85-332, 86-332, 87-332, 88-332, 89-332, 90-332, 91-332, 92-332, 93-332, 94-332, 95-332, 96-332, 97-332, 98-332, 99-332, 100-332, 101-332, 102-332, 103-332, 104-332, 105-332, 106-332, 107-332, 108-332, 109-332, 110-332, 111-332, 112-332, 113-332, 114-332, 115-332, 116-332, 117-332, 118-332, 119-332, 120-332, 121-332, 122-332, 123-332, 124-332, 125-332, 126-332, 127-332, 128-332, 129-332, 130-332, 131-332, 132-332, 133-332, 134-332, 135-332, 136-332, 137-332, 138-332, 139-332, 140-332, 141-332, 142-332, 143-332, 144-332, 145-332, 146-332, 147-332, 148-332, 149-332, 150-332, 151-332, 152-332, 153-332, 154-332, 155-332, 156-332, 157-332, 158-332, 159-332, 160-332, 161-332, 162-332, 163-332, 164-332, 165-332, 166-332, 167-332, 168-332, 169-332, 170-332, 171-332, 172-332, 173-332, 174-332, 175-332, 176-332, 177-332, 178-332, 179-332, 180-332, 181-332, 182-332, 183-332, 184-332, 185-332, 186-332, 187-332, 188-332, 189-332, 190-332, 191-332, 192-332, 193-332, 194-332, 195-332, 196-332, 197-332, 198-332, 199-332, 200-332, 201-332, 202-332, 203-332, 204-332, 205-332, 206-332, 207-332, 208-332, 209-332, 210-332, 211-332, 212-332, 213-332, 214-332, 215-332, 216-332, 217-332, 218-332, 219-332, 220-332, 221-332, 222-332, 223-332, 224-332, 225-332, 226-332, 227-332, 228-332, 229-332, 230-332, 231-332, 232-332, 233-332, 234-332, 235-332, 236-332, 237-332, 238-332, 239-332, 240-332, 241-332, 242-332, 243-332, 244-332, 245-332, 246-332, 247-33

Impressive Herbert increases pressure on illustrious rivals in practice for Monaco Grand Prix

Ferrari may risk future on high-stakes gamble

FROM ROB HUGHES
IN MONTE CARLO

THE Monaco Grand Prix, always the maverick of the Formula One season, a throwback to racing round the houses, has raised the stakes this weekend.

By coincidence, it is the fiftieth anniversary of the birth of Ferrari and the fiftieth Cannes Film Festival, so, by day, the glitterati dress down in jeans and T-shirts and peer into the Ferrari pits, wondering if tomorrow could revive the legend, and by night, in black bow ties and tuxedos, the wealthy slip away to Cannes.

Maybe they do not hear the whisper of the paddocks that Ferrari, not pleased by being upstaged by Johnny Herbert in his Sauber in unofficial practice, intend this morning to surprise everyone and bring out ahead of schedule, the new engine from their Maranello factory. The heat is on and Michael Schumacher and Eddie Irvine may be propelled into the make-or-break session of their season. It is heady stuff, on top of the

fusion of wealth and power and the great lottery that, a year ago, reduced this race, rain-affected, to just three finishers out of 21 starters. Thus does official practice, the rush for pole position and the front of the grid, mean more on this tight and narrow circuit than anywhere else.

It is said that, if Ferrari finish high among the qualifiers today, there will be a great queue of cars coming up from Italy — 30,000 of them, equal to the total number of residents of Prince Rainier's principality.

Viewing is "free", if you can find a perch, security extremely difficult and sometimes keeping the car on the track, where drivers boast of "kissing" the steel barriers wrapped around the streets, is itself an examination of nerve, experience and concentration.

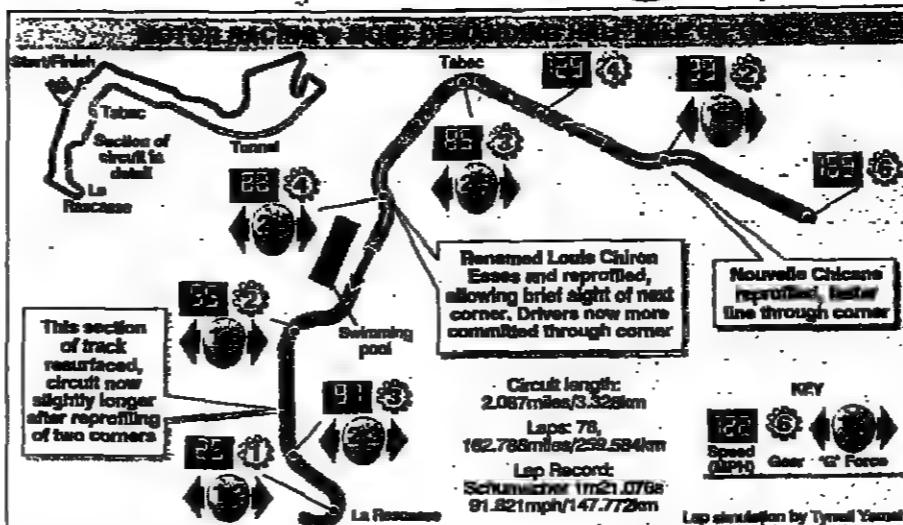
Aficionados claim that this is a slow and safe track and the fact that Lorenzo Bandini, exactly 30 years ago, was the fast driver to pay the ultimate price of his life appears to verify that. However, the game of kissing the barriers, literally smudging them with



Ralf Schumacher: youth

black tyremarks like lipstick, is more dangerous than the macho followers make it appear.

This is serious racing, an examination of the drivers on a track that never relents from imposing switchbacks speeds and gears and G-forces. There are 20 gear-changes in all, allegedly just three areas in which cars can safely overtake one another and, coming out



of the tunnel, arguably the most concentrated half-mile of road racing in the business.

Under the guidance of the FIA, the sport's governing body, that stretch of road has been resurfaced to try to level out some of the bumps. It begins with a 169mph short straight into the Nouvelle Chicane, new because it has been slightly smoothed out this season, ensuring that,

once they drop down to second gear, to 30mph, the drivers may, for once, be able to see what is in front of them rather than merely to guess.

Using information compiled by Tyrrell-Ford, one can then simulate the next seconds of a driver's priorities. Out of the chicane, accelerating to fourth gear and 120mph, the drivers head for Tabac Corner. This was where Juan-

Manuel Fangio, the greatest of them all, won his first grand prix, where, by noticing that the spectators had suddenly turned their heads towards the next corner, he intuitively slackened off and was able to steer a line through a multiple crash.

After Tabac, the second place on the track that has been altered is the first S-bend, approaching the swimming-

pool complex. It, too, used to be taken "blind" by racers, who approached it at right angles and could not see a stalled car, oil on the track or some other deadly hazard. The new, slightly more driver-friendly curve has been renamed Louis Chiron. Through that, down to second gear, for the next bend, accelerating again to 91 mph, the cars sweep towards La Rascasse, a corner that reduces the driver's speed in a touch more than 20mph; reduces the gear shift to first gear and lowers the G-force to a momentarily tolerable 1.2.

The thoughts of inexpérience. It is all around: Ralf Schumacher's Italian partner in the Jordan, Giancarlo Biscicella, has only a couple of years' more experience. The Stewart-Ford partnership, Rubens Barrichello and Jean Magnussen, are also riding on wings of youth.

This being a track dominated by know-how, Herbert, fourth and third in his past two attempts here, intends to use his knowledge, as do the Benetton duo of Jean Alesi and Gerhard Berger. There is the precious knowledge of veterans who have been around Monaco, the place where 11 of the racers actually live, more than most. Therefore, they know the royal motto "Deo Juvante" — with God's health.

EQUESTRIANISM

Stark ghosts into lead after new test for dressage

BY JENNY MACARTHUR

IAN STARK, riding Lady Stanwick's Stanwick Ghost, has a slender 1.4pts lead over Robert Lemieux, of Canada, on Just An Ace at the end of the dressage phase of the Mitsubishi Motors Badminton Horse Trials.

Stark, 43, who won in 1986 and 1988 on Sir Watte, produced an attractive flowing test on the 11-year-old gelding, one of the few horses to cope with the flying changes in the new test, which was rewarded with high marks from each of the three judges.

Other good tests on a mostly dispiriting day of dressage came from Mary King, on Star Appeal, who are lying in seventh place and Chris Bartle, the British team trainer, who is in ninth place on Word Perfect. The joint overnight leaders on Thursday, David O'Connor, of the United States, on Custom Made, and Linda Algonsson, of Sweden, on Lafayette, have dropped to third.

Despite his lead, Stark has little room for complacency as the competition moves on to the influential speed and endurance phase today. Last year, Stark led after the cross country on the same horse but dropped to sixth place after the showjumping. In Atlanta, Stanwick Ghost fell coming out of the water. Stark, who describes the course as "one of the biggest and most impressive" he has seen, has the advantage of an early round on his first horse, Arakai, before tackling it with Stanwick Ghost.

RESULTS

MITSUBISHI MOTORS TROPHY (after the dressage)

1. Stanwick Ghost (I) Stark, GB	48.20%	
2. Just An Ace (R. Lemieux, Can)	47.8 - 3 equals	
3. Lafayette (L. Algonsson, Swe) and Custom Made (D. O'Connor, USA)	46.6 - 5, Anchovy (P. Mur, GB) 49.4 - 6, Headley Grange (D. Dix, GB) 49.8 - 7, Star Appeal (M. King, GBR) 49.8 - 8, Power (C. Bartle, GBR) 52.0 - 9, Ward Phoenix (C. Bartle, GBR) 52.4 - 10, Cameron (X. Labasse, FRA) 52.4	48.20%

For most of the first half of the dressage yesterday it was difficult to believe that this was eventing at its highest level. Many horses appeared unable to cope with the greater degree of collection required by the new test. Several horses, most notably Gary Parsons' Magic Rogue and Karen Dixon's Too Smart, who both represented Britain in Atlanta, were so lit up they were virtually unable to perform the movements of the test.

Too Smart, in joint-3rd place, gave notice of his intention.

tions from the moment he entered the arena. The 11-year-old gelding cracked his head up in the air and proceeded to ignore all instructions from his rider. In an embarrassing afternoon for the Great Britain selectors, Chris Hunnable and Mr Bootie, another Olympic partnership, were also victims of Badminton's tense atmosphere, ending their unsettled test with a charge out of the arena.

Lemieux's arrival in the arena on Just An Ace at the beginning of the afternoon session came as something of a relief. The 15-year-old gelding, by Just A Monarch, produced a relaxed, obedient test which earned him a mark of 47.6. King then boosted British hopes with a good workmanlike performance on her Burghley winner, Star Appeal. The 12-year-old gelding is not an extravagant mover but what he lacks in flair he makes up for in accuracy. King is hoping that accuracy will extend to the cross country today.

Algonsson, having her first attempt around the course, has decided on unusual tactics for the formidable lake complex. "I'll just kick on and scream," she said.

Several top riders are hoping to disprove Hugh Thomas's forecast that only a rider in the top three after the dressage will win. William Fox-Pitt is in fourteenth place on his Olympic horse, Cosmopolitan, and Blyth Tait, the Olympic champion, is joint-thirteenth.



Parsonage had an unhappy test on Magic Rogue, who could not settle to the task

SAILING

Owen takes second world title

BY EDWARD GORMAN
SAILING CORRESPONDENT

BRUCE OWEN and his British crew on board the Ian Howlett-designed *Scoundrel* were yesterday celebrating a convincing win in the starboard world championship, jointly hosted by the Yacht Club de Cannes and the Yacht Club de France.

Owen, who had moved level with Haining after his rival's misfortune, resisted a strong attack by David Paulino, the Scottish champion, and eventually won by a margin of 2½ lengths. "It is the hardest race I've ever done," he said. "When Paulino pushed me after Barnes, I was counting every stroke."

It was Owen's second world title in the class, one of the oldest still racing, with his previous success having come in New York in 1987.

For Owen, whose crew on *Scoundrel* was Jonathan Howe, Ron Lipsett, Guy Barton and Jonny Smallridge, this was a particularly satisfying victory after his recovery from a motorcycle accident last year that had threatened to end the 50-year-old's competitive sailing career.

After six days of the fifth leg of the BT Global Challenge, the fleet remains relatively bunched with 78 miles separating the leading yacht, *Commercial Union*, from the back-marker, *Com*, as they head slowly north from Cape Town towards Boston.

So far what Clay Blyth, the race director, called the "dolphin, sunshine and gin and tonic leg" has produced some unspectacular downwind sailing.

Yesterday the overall leader, Mike Golding, on *Group 4*, was in second place with his nearest rival for overall honours, Simon Walker, on *Toshiki Wave Warrior*, just a few miles back in third.

Kettle too hot for Haining

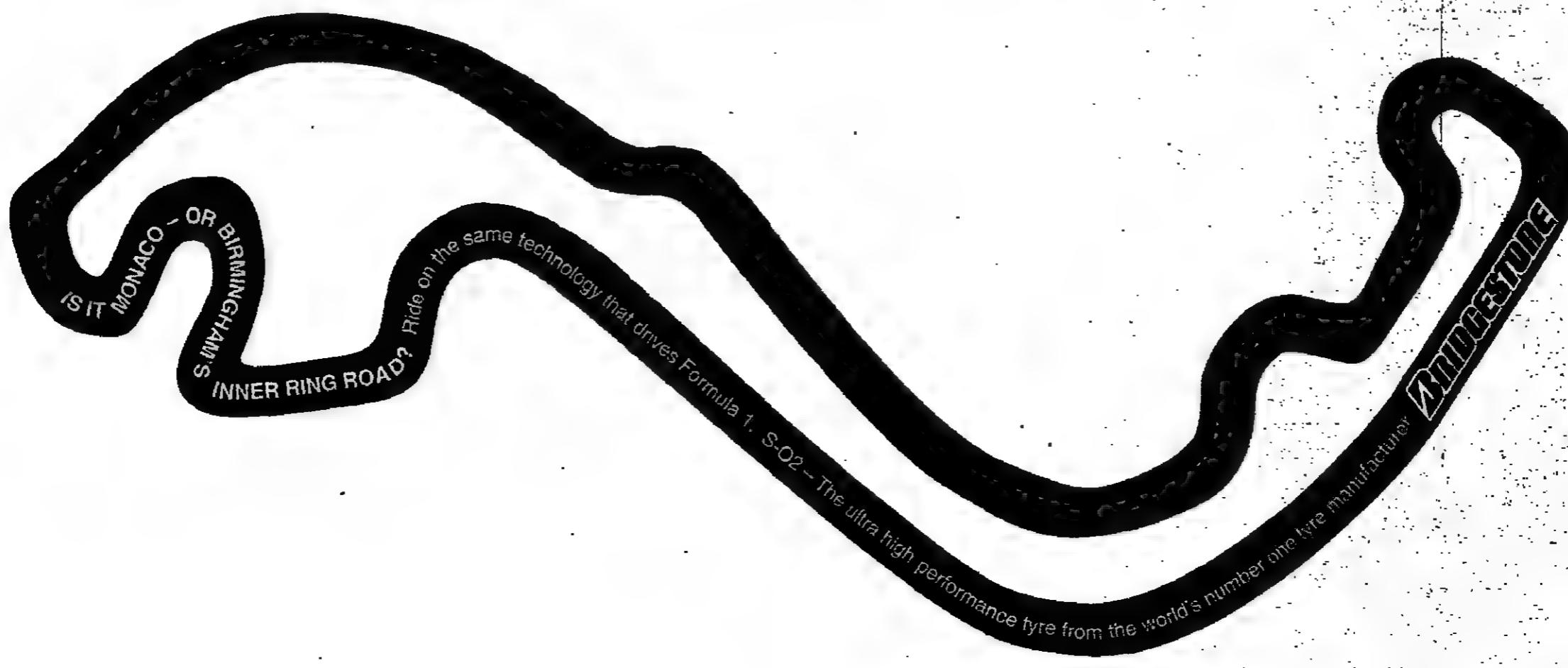
A CHAMPION gave way to youth yesterday when Martin Kettle, 25, added the Wingfield Sculls title to his Scullers Head title at his first attempt when Peter Haining, defending his title for the fourth time, dropped out after suffering a coughing fit. (Mike Rosewell writes.)

Kettle, who had moved level with Haining before his rival's misfortune, resisted a strong attack by David Paulino, the Scottish champion, and eventually won by a margin of 2½ lengths. "It is the hardest race I've ever done," he said. "When Paulino pushed me after Barnes, I was counting every stroke."

Jade: A frustrating defeat for Nicola Fairbrother, the 1992 Olympic silver medal-winner, in the lightweight section was a rare blip on an otherwise successful day for Britons at the European championships in Ostend, Belgium, yesterday. Fairbrother still has the chance of securing third place when the repêchage is completed tomorrow.

Bowls: Norma Shaw, the world indoor singles champion, from Thornaby, who was left out of the England team to compete in the Atlantic Rim outdoor championships in Llandrindod Wells in August, was yesterday named as England's singles representative at the European indoor championships in Jersey in November.

Tennis: Great Britain's women players earned promotion to Europe-Africa group one of the Fed Cup in Antalya, Turkey, yesterday. Having won their first four group matches this week, a 2-1 victory over Denmark in their final game took them out of the bottom division.



Twickenham provides stage for final flourish to celebrate first season of professional era

Leicester seek to expand ranks of city's successes

BY DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

ALL good things, it is said, come in threes, which may comfort Leicester in their preparations for the Pilkington Cup final against Sale at Twickenham today. The city's football club has already claimed a trophy, the Coca-Cola Cup, Leicestershire are the county cricket champions and now, Leicester have the opportunity for a rare treble by adding a rugby union honour.

To do so they must cast aside the cares that have beset them this past month and rediscover the form that made them well-nigh unbeatable (apart from Brive) in the middle part of the season. That, as some other clubs have found of late, is never easy. Good form derives from consistency of playing personnel and that is precisely the problem that has plagued the closing stages of Leicester's league campaign.

Yet they will start favourites against a Sale team all too few of whose members have encountered the tormented atmosphere of packed Twickenham. Playing in front of a frenzied 5,000 at Heywood Road is one thing; multiply that number by 15, with all the tensions of a first cup final, and the task confronting Sale is all too apparent.

But at the heart of their side are three players — the M Club, you might say — all of whom have enjoyed the Twickenham experience. Dewi Morris, known the ground of old, as the England scrum half in 11 appearances there; John Mitchell and Simon Mannix, No 8 and stand-off half respectively, have toured with New Zealand and



Greenwood: return

TODAY'S TEAMS AT TWICKENHAM

LEICESTER		SALE			
O	N Malone	15	J Mallinder		
N	C John	14	D Rees		
M	W Greenwood	13	J Bonsu		
L	S Poller	12	A Hadley		
K	L Lloyd	11	T Beirn		
J	J Stranay	10	S Mannix		
I	A Healey	9	D Morris		
A	G Rowlands	1	P Winterby		
B	R Cooker	2	A Smith		
C	D Garforth	3	N Ahumada		
F	J Wells	4	D Entwistle		
H	M Johnson	5	D Baldwin		
E	M Poole	6	D O'Grady		
H	N Back	7	J Mitchell		
G	E Miller	8			
Replacements: B Campisi (Yorkshire)		J Mallinder			
REPLACEMENTS: P R Liley, Q A Kardon, R W Drake-Lee, S D Richards, T D West, U Hockney.		C John, J Bonsu, A Hadley, T Beirn, S Mannix, D Morris, P Winterby, A Smith, N Ahumada, D Entwistle, D Baldwin, D O'Grady, J Mitchell.			
CAPTAIN: J Mallinder (15).					
REPLACEMENTS: 18 J O'Reilly, 17 C Yates, 18 A Morris, 19 S Fletcher, 20 L Hawson, 21 M Driver.					

PATHS TO THE FINAL: Leicester: best Newcastle 26-21 (H); best Bath 33-28 (A); best Newcastle 18-8 (H); best Gloucester 26-13 (A); best Richmond 34-30 (H); best Cardiff 57-4 (A); best Northampton 22-9 (H); best Harlequins 26-16 (H).

TELEVISION: Sky Sports 1: 2pm (live); BBC2: Rugby Special 5.30pm (highlights).

Maggs called into Ireland tour party

BY DAVID HANDS

BRISTOL, who are halfway towards preserving their first-division status and the commercial opportunities that go with it, received an additional boost to morale yesterday when Kevin Maggs, their young centre, was added to the Ireland development squad for the tour to New Zealand and Western Samoa.

Maggs, 22, takes the place of Jonathan Bell, the Northampton utility back, who is injured. He will join the squad after the second leg of the Courage Clubs Championship play-offs tomorrow, when Bristol take a nine-point lead into the meeting with Bedford at the Memorial ground and London Irish bid to recover a

two-point deficit against Coventry at Sunbury.

The Bristol player notified Brian Asterton, the Ireland coach, of his antecedents too late to be chosen for the original party, which leaves next Thursday. By that time Bristol should have ensured their future against a Bedford team likely to feature Scott Murray in the back row, in the absence of Rudolf Straelen, who has had an operation on his ruptured Achilles tendon and is not yet to resume training for at least three months.

Harlequins have denied reports of a rift between Richard Best, their director of coaching, and leading players, among them Will Carling, the former England captain. "Somebody is poisoning the

harmony at Harlequins and when I find out who is harming us, there will then be a serious conflict," Roger Looker, the club chairman, said. "We do have to hammer out a culture for the modern game, we have been working on it and I believe that our internal discussions have been blown out of all proportion."

Neath, the Welsh League champions in 1996, and Newport will avoid relegation if they can, respectively, secure two and one league points against Caerphilly and Cardiff today. Dumbarton are favourites to join Caerphilly, Treorchy and Newbridge in the second division next season, though they will all receive financial compensation from the Welsh Rugby Union, depending on their finishing order.

HOCKEY: TEDDINGTON AND HIGHTOWN CHASE COMPENSATION IN THE CUP

Double beckons for dominant Reading

BY SYDNEY FRISKIN

SIMON MASON will be missing from the Reading team when they attempt to complete a league and cup double by beating Teddington in the Hockey Association Cup final at Milton Keynes tomorrow. The England and Great Britain goalkeeper has not fully recovered from a back injury.

Teddington, who have no injury problems, have a few scores to settle. They lost both league matches to Reading this season, finishing runners-up to them in the premier division by a point. In the cup semi-finals last season, Reading came from behind to defeat Teddington 3-2 and went on to win the trophy.

Reading's attacks are expected to be launched by their two front-runners, Ashdown and Pearn, with the latter

Cullen rules out the cautious approach

BY A CORRESPONDENT

AFTER a disappointing season spent staving off relegation, Hightown are hoping to start on a positive note when they meet Doncaster in the semi-finals of the AEWHA Cup tomorrow.

Tina Cullen, Hightown's captain and prolific goalscorer, has just returned from international duty in Vancouver, where England won all four of their matches in as many days. Fatigue, she insisted, is not an issue.

"It will have been eight days since our last international and that's plenty of time to have recovered," Cullen said. "We've had a disastrous league season, losing heavily to Doncaster in one game and winning the other, which saved us from relegation.

In the Hockey Association Trophy final, De Montfort University from Bedford take on the winners from last year, West Herts.

"We know the cup game

will be tough, especially on their home ground in front of a big crowd. I believe that the side with the best mental approach will win, but we'll have to put in a lot of legwork and go out and play. There's no point in sitting back in the cup."

The Merseyside club, the league champions last year, have an abundance of experience but Doncaster have already shown that they do not care much for reputations and, after ensuring their Premiership place is safe, they are keen to make it to their first cup final.

In the other semi-final, Ipswich take on Clifton in a repeat of the final last year, when the Suffolk club triumphed in a penalty shoot-out after an indescribably dull contest.

"We know the cup game

Glittering prizes now in sight for Mallinder
Christopher Irvine on the Sale captain who is discovering success late in his playing career

Lucky Jim? Hardly. At 31, everything has come at once for Jim Mallinder. After years with barely a flicker of recognition of his conspicuous talents beyond Sale, the most underrated full back in England is suddenly in vogue.

It is important to Leicester that Healey and their other five Lions remove all thoughts of the tour from their minds. Next week they go into camp in Weybridge, this week is for their club and their colleagues, with whom they have shared the grind of a long and difficult season. The restoration of Will Greenwood is particularly important: his play at centre this season has taken him to the verge of international honours and it is in midfield that Leicester have been so porous recently.

This final is also for their loyal supporters, who were denied a sight of league and cup silverware last season and may suffer the same ordeal three times over this year. Though Leicester's ticket allocation was 17,500, nearer 30,000 of the crowd today will be supporting them at a final that has been downgraded in recent weeks by pronouncements from all and sundry that league positions, and qualification for Europe, are of more significance than a cup final.

For a club that has won the trophy four times, and appeared in five more finals, that is hard to take and may in any case no longer be true next season. There is pressure for the cup-winners to take a qualifying place in the Heineken Cup and the English Rugby Partnership is also likely to press for a change in the distribution of money from the Pilkington Cup.

It is clearly inequitable that the same rules should pertain in a professional era as they did in amateur days. Clubs that generate gate receipts of nearly £1 million are entitled to more than the £35,000 that each finalist will get today, which represents a big loss on their investment.

This is also the last event of a dramatic first full season of professional rugby. Sale and Leicester played out a drawn game last week, which was marred by occasional flash-points. Twickenham today should be no place for settling scores, rather it should show off the "new" rugby in all its populist appeal. Two clubs, both of whom can play with tremendous clarity, should provide the season with a fitting conclusion.

Under first Paul Turner

and now John Mitchell, their



Mallinder's strong running has brought success for Sale and international recognition

New Zealand coach, Sale have become a potent force. Like a vintage wine, Mallinder improves with age. Mitchell had his doubts about having a captain at full back, but Mallinder is an exceptional reader of the game, chipping into the line at precisely the right moment, as in his glorious try to help Sale beat Harlequins in the semi-finals. The captain has his "thinkers" — Mitchell, Dewi Morris and Simon Mannix — to dictate the flow in midfield.

When his international career emerged, Mallinder was determined not to blow it. On a miserable March night in Leicester, his two-trty display stood out in an otherwise risible England. A performance in losing to France A.

Heineken Cup to Leicester, after the draw with them last Saturday, Mallinder is determined to avenge that disappointment. He is mindful of me and in Argentina, I want to set a standard by which others will have to play better to outdo me," he said.

After eight years as a physical education and mathematics master at William Hulme's Grammar School, Manchester, Mallinder is to concentrate on rugby and youth development work at Sale. It is a necessary step if he is to fulfil his ambition of playing in the next World Cup — provided he is not seen as too long in the tooth at 33.

Having narrowly missed out on qualification for the

Heineken Cup to Leicestershire, after the draw with them last Saturday, Mallinder is determined to avenge that disappointment. He is mindful of the important absences of Charlie Vyvyan and Fowler, and that he has never been on the winning side against Leicester. If allowed to indulge their quick rucking and game, Sale could put that record straight.

"Leicester will be trying to prevent quick delivery, so the referee will have an important part to play," Mallinder said. "They're a great set of forwards, but we've some useful ones ourselves, perhaps not so well-known, but people who can make those at Twickenham sit up and take notice."

Referee: E Murray (Grenock Wanderers)

Referee: E Murray (Grenock Wanderers)

COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO THE WEEKEND FIXTURES

FOOTBALL

Match 30 unplayed
* denotes off-form match

NATIONAL LEAGUE First division play-offs Semi-finals, 1st legs

* Crystal Palace v Wolverhampton
Sheffield Utd v Ipswich

Second division
Colchester Utd v Dundee Utd

Hull City v Plymouth Argyle

Third division
Aldershot v St Johnstone

Cheltenham Town v Chesterfield

Doncaster Rovers v Walsall

Exeter City v Hartlepool United

Fleetwood Town v Stevenage

Grimsby Town v Cambridge United

Harrogate Town v Cheltenham Town

Hartlepool United v Oldham Athletic

Huddersfield Town v Wrexham

Leeds United v Grimsby Town

Lincoln City v Stevenage

Morecambe v Shrewsbury Town

Nottingham Forest v Wrexham

Oldham Athletic v Hartlepool United

Portsmouth v Wrexham

Shrewsbury Town v Wrexham

Southend United v Wrexham

Stoke City v Wrexham

Swindon Town v Wrexham

Wrexham v Shrewsbury Town

Wrexham v Wrexham

THE TIMES GUIDE TO THE PREMIERSHIP'S FINAL WEEKEND

ARSENAL

When Derby played the Premiership game at Highbury, Sturridge, their striker, ran the Arsenal defence ragged and the home side were lucky to get off the hook. Their ageing rearguard, whatever statistics say, is always vulnerable to quick players who run at it. Pitiful home performances against Blackburn and Newcastle and clear creative weaknesses in midfield and on the wings will mean summer signings. Several faces on parade at the Baseball Ground may be missing come next season. BG

DERBY COUNTY

After 102 years at the Baseball Ground, Derby will leave for their new home at Pride Park after the game against Arsenal tomorrow. Paul McGrath will be saying farewell too, having helped Derby to avoid relegation in their first season in the Premiership. McGrath is being released by the club, although he intends to prolong his career elsewhere. "It would be nice if Paul could start and maybe come off early so we can all show our appreciation," Jim Smith, the manager, said. RH

MANCHESTER UNITED

There will, according to Alex Ferguson, the manager, be few outings at Old Trafford during the summer, and even fewer goings. Eric Cantona will be staying for another year, at least, and Brian McClair, the one out-of-contract player, will be offered an extension next week. "I don't think there will be many signings. The squad we have got will be able to cope next season even if we don't add to it," Ferguson said, adding that he would be pleased with a break from "you lot" — the media. DM

SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY

It has been a calamitous few days for Wednesday. Two defeats mean that they must rely on others to offer them a UEFA Cup opportunity — and also beat Liverpool in the bargain. David Pleat, the manager, is optimistic. "We have the opportunity and we will put up a good fight," he said. "If we can beat Liverpool, there's no saying that the teams above us will win their games." Pleat needs Aston Villa and Chelsea to drop points if Wednesday are to have a chance of finishing fifth. DM

SUNDERLAND

Sunderland players will collect individual bonuses of almost £40,000 each if they avoid relegation, the board having set aside £500,000 for this purpose. To be sure of collecting such a windfall the team must win at Wimbledon, but at least there is no lack of incentive. They will be cheered on by around 15,000 Wearside fans who are making the trip to Selhurst Park. A Wimbledon spokesman said: "We're expecting the biggest away following of the season and have made contingency plans." DM

ASTON VILLA

TICKETS: Sold out
10-YEAR RECORD: 3-1, -, 1-2, 2-1, 1-1, 2-1, 1-1, 0-2, 1-1, 3-0
HOW THEY LINE UP
ASTON VILLA (from) M Oakes, S Stanhope, G Southgate, A Wright, A Townsend, J Taylor, M Draper, S Milosevic, D York, J Joachim, F Nelson, U Ebihog, L Hendrie, G Farrelly, R Schmees, S Curcio, A Rachel
SOUTHAMPTON (from) M Taylor, J Dodd, C Lundkvist, F Benali, R Dryden, J Magilton, E Berkovic, M Oakley, R Stater, M Evans, E Olsensson, M Le Tissier, A Nelson, N Maddison, S Basham, U van Gobbel, D Beasant

LEEDS UNITED v MIDDLESBROUGH

TICKETS: Sold out
10-YEAR RECORD: -, 2-0, -, 2-1, -, 3-0, -, 0-1
HOW THEY LINE UP
LEEDS UNITED (from) N Marney, G Hale, G Kelly, L Reddick, C Palmer, D Welbourn, L Sharpe, A Donga, R Wallace, M Ford, L Bowyer, I Rush, D Illey, B Deane, I Harte, M Jackson, P Evans, R Molnar, P Laurent, M Beaveny
MIDDLESBROUGH (from) B Roberts, C Fleming, N Pearson, G Festa, C Blackmore, P Stamp, R Mustoe, Emerson, C Hignett, Juninho, M Beck, F Ravanelli, V Kinder, N Cox, S Vickers, D Whyte

24: A Shearer (Newcastle United)
21: I Wright (Arsenal)
18: R Fowler (Liverpool)
17: D Yorke (Aston Villa), O G Solskjaer (Manchester United)
16: F Ravanelli (Middlesbrough)
14: L Ferdinand (Newcastle United)
13: D Dublin (Coventry City), S Clatridge (Leicester City), E Cantona (Manchester United), S Collymore (Liverpool)
11: D Bergkamp (Arsenal), C Sutton (Blackburn Rovers), D Sturridge (Derby County), S Clatridge (Leicester City), E Cantona (Manchester United), Juninho (Middlesbrough)

The official Internet site of the FA Carling Premiership is at <http://www fa-carling.com/>

ASTON VILLA

A win against Southampton tomorrow, or even a draw, will give Villa a return ticket to Europe next season. After their limp departure against Helsingborgs IF, of Sweden, in the first round of the UEFA Cup in September, Brian Little, the Villa manager, would love another bite of the continental cherry. It has been a strange campaign in many respects, with plenty of good, bad and indifferent displays at Villa Park, but all will be forgiven and forgotten if safe passage is secured. RK

EVERTON

There was relief at Goodison yesterday, as the club celebrated Premiership survival. Middlesbrough's draw at Blackburn means that Everton cannot go down, even if they lose against Chelsea tomorrow. "I'm relieved because we've got so many injuries, and I don't want to throw any more kids into a game we had to win," David Watson, the caretaker manager, said. Watson was prepared to take responsibility for relegation, a magnanimous gesture given his brief tenancy. DM

BLACKBURN ROVERS

Tony Parkes can expect some reward for his remarkable achievement of keeping Blackburn in the Premiership. When he assumed control in November, it was supposed to be a two-week stint. Six months on, and he has completed the longest caretaker manager's spell in history. His prize will be the assistant manager's position under Roy Hodgson. "I'll be glad to step out of the spotlight. I didn't want the job when I took over, and I still don't now," Parkes said. DM

LEEDS UNITED

Only three times this century has a side in the top division scored fewer goals in a season than the 27 that Leeds presently boast. All were relegated, which reflects creditably on the Leeds defence, but less so on the entertainment provided at Elland Road. The game tomorrow should, in theory, be an exciting exception to a dull rule because Middlesbrough require victory to avoid the drop. As for Leeds, even a draw could ensure a finish in the top half of the table. RH

NEWCASTLE UNITED

Kenny Dalglish has finally secured the signing of Shay Given, the highly promising young Blackburn goalkeeper. The Ireland international will complete a move on June 1, with a tribunal deciding the fee. Dalglish, though, still has other things on his mind. His side could yet finish second, and he is already looking to improve on that next season. "Manchester United are the best, but the gap is not wide, and there's no reason why we can't do it next year," he said. DM

CHELSEA

Ruud Gullit has warned his Chelsea players about taking their foot off the pedal before the FA Cup Final, but there is scant incentive for them to risk life and limb in so marginal a game as this. Everton themselves, having scrabbled to safety, will no longer be fuelled by desperation. Gianfranco Zola and his tricky hemstitch will not be saved for Wembley. This gives Gianluca Vialli another chance to prove he is no busted flush, so at least one player will have an incentive to shine. BG

COVENTRY CITY

Coventry require victory, nothing less, against Tottenham at White Hart Lane tomorrow to stand a chance of preserving their Premiership status. Even that might not be enough, should results elsewhere go against them, and renowned escapologists that they are, after 30 years in the top flight, matters appear grim. Gordon Strachan, the player-manager, is still planning ahead, having made a couple of recent trips to France to assess the available talent. Sadly, it looks like "au revoir", Gordon. RK

LIVERPOOL

Distress in the Liverpool dressing room: "The coaching staff are angry, and there are maybe only two players they wouldn't sell if the money was right," one chastened player admitted. The two McManaman and Fowler, of course. Beyond the Scouse pair, things have stagnated and even the players grumble that nothing has changed from last season. There will be changes this summer, though, the first being the departure of Collymore, a move reportedly designed to promote more harmony. DM

HOW THEY STAND

	P.	pts	Goal	Last five	1st game
		diff		W	W
1 Manchester United	37	72	+30	WWDDO	
2 Liverpool	37	67	+25	WLWLL	
3 Newcastle	37	65	+28	WWWD	
4 Arsenal	37	65	+28	WLDDL	
5 Aston Villa	37	58	+12	LLWWL	
6 Chelsea	37	58	+2	LLWWL	
7 Sheffield Wednesday	37	53	-5	LLWWL	
8 Wimbledon	37	46	-11	LLWWL	
9 Tottenham	37	46	-11	LLWWL	
10 Derby	37	45	-10	LLWWL	
11 Middlesbrough	37	44	-10	LLWWL	
12 Macclesfield	37	42	-12	LLWWL	
13 Blackpool	37	42	-12	LLWWL	
14 West Ham	37	42	-12	LLWWL	
15 Everton	37	41	-5	LLWWL	
16 Southampton	37	40	-17	LLWWL	
17 Sunderland	37	38	-9	LLWWL	
18 Middlesbrough	37	38	-9	LLWWL	
19 Coventry	37	35	-17	WWDDO	
20 Nottingham Forest	37	34	-23	WWDDO	
Middlesbrough deducted three points					

WEST HAM UNITED

Their safety confirmed, West Ham can go to Old Trafford and play a full part in Manchester United's celebrations tomorrow. Harry Redknapp, the manager, could not bring himself to tune in to the relegation denouement at Ewood Park on Thursday. "Frank Lampard [his assistant] listened to Clubfoot and relayed messages," Redknapp explained. "We were deep in trouble but we kept our nerve. I don't want to go through that again." It may be good to talk, but it is even better to survive. KP

Report: Brian Glanville, Russell Kampson, Richard Hobson, Nick Szczepaniak, Keith Pike, David Mackie. Statistics: Julian Desborough

WIMBLEDON

"We're proud of our achievements," was the verdict of Joe Kinnear, the manager, on Wimbledon's season. "We've won a lot of friends with our football, and we want to finish as high as we can by beating Sunderland." Having relegated Nottingham Forest last Saturday and ended Liverpool's title hopes on Tuesday, Wimbledon, with victory tomorrow in what is expected to be Oyvind Leonhardsen's last game before a £4.5 million transfer, could send Sunderland down. NS

SOUTHAMPTON

A draw at Villa Park tomorrow will be enough for Southampton, unbeaten in seven games, to retain their Premiership place. Graeme Souness, the manager, is already planning for next season by signing Kevin Davies, the Chesterfield forward for whom he had a million-pound bid rejected before a tribunal. Less promising is the decision of Hampshire County Council to review planning permission already given for Southampton's new ground. NS

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR

There will be little tea and sympathy at White Hart Lane tomorrow, when Coventry visit in desperate search of Premiership survival. "It's more important for them than us but we can afford to worry about that," Andy Sinton, the Tottenham winger, said. "That's not being unkind or harsh. We've just got to look after ourselves." Darren Anderton will again be missing because of injury and will soon travel to Sweden to undergo "bio-mechanical assessment", whatever that is. RK

BLACKBURN ROVERS v LEICESTER CITY

TICKETS: Seats available

10-YEAR RECORD: -3-3 0-0, 2-4, 1-0, 1-1, 0-1, 0-1, 0-1, 0-1, 0-1, 0-1

HOW THEY LINE UP

BLACKBURN ROVERS (from) J Flory, H Berg, G Loe, Sax, J Kerne, T Shanwood, C Hendon, G Dorris, K Galagher, L Bohman, I Pearce, G Filbert, S Ripley, P Warhurst, S Given, W McKinlay, P Pedersen

LEICESTER CITY (from) K Keller, S Grayson, M Whittle, S Walsh, M Elliott, J Watts, S Prior, P Kamara, C Hill, F Holling, S Campbell, S Wilson, N Lemon, M Izett, S Guppy, S Canage, M Robins, E Heskey, I Marshall, K Pool

WEST HAM UNITED (from) L Milenko, R Hall, R Ferdinand, S Bla, R Williams, P Rees, S Lomas, I Bishop, M Hughes, S Lazdins, J Hartson, P Kosci, M Croydon

MANCHESTER UNITED v WEST HAM UNITED

TICKETS: Sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: 2-3, 3-1, 2-0, -, 2-1, -, 3-0, 1-0, 2-1

HOW THEY LINE UP

MANCHESTER UNITED (from) P Schmeichel, G Neville, R Johnson, D May, P Neville, K Poborsky, D Beckham, R Keane, B McClellan, P Scholes, A Cole, G Solskjaer, E Cantona, R van der Gouw

WEST HAM UNITED (from) L Milenko, R Hall, R Ferdinand, S Bla, R Williams, P Rees, S Lomas, I Bishop, M Hughes, S Lazdins, J Hartson, P Kosci, M Croydon

NEWCASTLE UNITED v NOTTINGHAM FOREST

TICKETS: Sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: 3-2, 0-1, 0-1, -, -, -, 2-1, 3-1

HOW THEY LINE UP

NEWCASTLE UNITED (from) S Smicer, S Watson, D Peacock, P Albert, J Beresford, K Gillespie, W Barton, D Besty, R Elliott, A Shearer, L Ferdinand, F Asprilla, S Helgeland, R Lee, L Clark

NOTTINGHAM FOREST (from) A Fotis, D Lytle, A Hart, M Agius, P Potts, S Lomas, I Bishop, M Hughes, S Lazdins, J Hartson, P Kosci, M Croydon

DARREN ANDERTON

DERBY COUNTY v ARSENAL

TICKETS: Sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: 0-1, 1-0, 2-1, 2-0, -, 0-1, 1-1, 1-1, 1-1

HOW THEY LINE UP

DERBY COUNTY (from) N Poart, P McGrath, C Dally, G Rover, R van der Laan, P Trolop, A Asprilla, C Powell, A Ward, R Williams, P Wansbeck, M Sola, D Powell, P Simpson, D Yates, M Taylor

ARSENAL (from) D Seaman, M Keegan, A Adams, S Bould, R Parlour, P Merson, P Vieira, N Winterburn, D Platt, D Bergkamp, S Hughes, L Dixon, S Marshall, N Anelka, P Shaw, I Salley, J Lukic

WIMBLEDON v SUNDERLAND

TICKETS: Seats available

10-YEAR RECORD: 0-1, 0-1, 0-1, 0-1, 0-1, 0-1, 0-1, 0-1, 0-1, 0-1

HOW THEY LINE UP

WIMBLEDON (from) N Sutton, K Cunningham, A Kimble, V James, P Forrester, D Holdsworth, M Goss, C Price, B McAllister, M Day, J East, A Reeves, D Jupp, A Clarke, P Head

SUNDERLAND (from) L Perez, D Kubica, M Gray, R Stewart, J Howey, D Williams, C Sutton, K Bell, C Waddic, D Phillips, B Roy, M Moore, N Quinn, A Rae, M Smith, C Woods, M Bridges, D Kelly, J Erikson

SHOOTING STARS

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR v COVENTRY CITY

TICKETS: Sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: 1-0, 2-1, 1-1, 3-2, 2-2, 4-3, 0-2, 1-2, 1-3, 3-1

HOW THEY LINE UP

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR (from) E Beardsell

FOOTBALL

Fight for survival reaches the point of no return

By DAVID MADDOCK

THE championship has been concluded already, but FA Carling Premiership football arrives at its annual denouement this weekend with plenty of plot still to be unravelled. On a day that television idiosyncratically calls "Super Sunday", not least among those issues yet to be resolved is the exact state of the English game itself.

Last season, Manchester United required 82 points to secure the title. This time, 71 points suffice. A year ago, Bolton Wanderers were relegated with 29 points and 38 points ensured survival. On Sunday, Middlesbrough, Coventry City, Sunderland and Southampton will attempt to avoid relegation knowing that 41 points may not save them. There has been a distinct narrowing of the Premiership. The question is, does that mean quality has improved or declined?

The evidence of Middlesbrough's plight would suggest that English football has been enhanced by the opening of its borders to the hordes of foreign players entering these shores. Without players such

as Ravanelli, Juninho and Emerson, within their ranks, surely they would have been already doomed by now. Nothing but victory will do for the North East club tomorrow and, even then, the odds are stacked against them if they are to stay up.

Southampton and Coventry escaped relegation on goal difference last season and here they are again in the same position. In the argument surrounding quality, the suggestion is that things have got neither better nor worse.

A glance at events at the top of the table tomorrow, however, surely provides ammunition for those who wish to demolish the ivory tower that has been the reputation of the English game for far too long now. Manchester United have won the championship with ridiculous ease while playing consistently below their best. They have conceded ten more goals this season than last and even Alex Ferguson, their manager, admits that the title has been won despite the distraction of the European Cup.

It did not go down well with his team-mates. Curtis Fleming said: "I just hope he flies back soon and isn't concentrating on just being fit for the Cup Final; because the Leeds match is much more important. He should be here having treatment."

Bryan Robson, the Middlesbrough manager, said: "I spoke to Ravanelli and he said he'd be on a plane on Saturday morning. He went to Italy because he believes in the treatment there and he said that he had trained for two days and told me he would definitely be playing at Elland Road."

It is not as simple as that, of course, and events on Teesside yesterday supported the theory that Middlesbrough will be relegated because their foreign players, or at least some of them, care little for the club and its traditions.

Ravanelli, the centre forward whose goals will surely be required to defeat Leeds United yesterday, apparently to treat a hamstring injury.

It did not go down well with his team-mates. Curtis Fleming said: "I just hope he flies back soon and isn't concentrating on just being fit for the Cup Final; because the Leeds match is much more important. He should be here having treatment."

Bryan Robson, the Middlesbrough manager, said: "I spoke to Ravanelli and he said he'd be on a plane on Saturday

Burley revels in Ipswich revival

By RUSSELL KEMPSON

GEORGE BURLEY, the Ipswich Town manager, has fond memories of Wembley. He played in the Ipswich side that defeated Arsenal 1-0 in the 1978 FA Cup Final and has sensed a similar spirit of *jole de vive* before the club's Nationwide League first division play-off against Sheffield United this afternoon.

Ipswich visit Bramall Lane for the first leg of the semi-final and, though the right to go on to Wembley has yet to be earned, Burley is encouraged by the enthusiastic response in the town. "It's great to see all the shops decked out in blue and white again," he said. "People are queuing for tickets and everyone wants to talk about the game. It's tremendous."

However, he is less impressed by Ipswich's success — two 3-1 league victories — against United this season. "That means nothing now," he said. "If anything, it will make United even more determined to beat us. I don't think anything will be decided this time around. I expect two very close, tense matches."

Crystal Palace's memories of the national stadium are not so distant and certainly not so favourable. A year ago, they played Leicester City in the first division final and were beaten by a goal from Steve Claridge in the final minute of extra time.

Steve Coppell, who replaced Dave Bassett in February, has quietly guided Palace back to form, after they lost their way in mid-season, and they take on Wolverhampton Wanderers in their semi-final, first leg at Selhurst Park today. Wolves might have to wait for the return at Molineux to make an impression, with Mark McGhee, their manager, beset by injury problems.

Jimmy Quinn and Mick Gooding, the joint player-managers of Reading, left the first division club by mutual consent yesterday after 2½ years at Elm Park. John Madejski, the Reading chairman, said: "We have decided to go forward under a new regime. We'll be looking for one manager only, somebody with experience."

Trevor Francis, the Birmingham City manager, has made his 28-strong first-team squad available for transfer after discovering that he has less funds than he expected for summer recruitment.

RUGBY LEAGUE: HUGHES UNHAPPY AT CROSS-CODE ADVENTURES

Wigan hope to close union frontier

By CHRISTOPHER IRVINE

WIGAN Warriors, stuck in mid-table in the Stones Super League, are to discourage players from taking up rugby union contracts at the end of this season. Despite the short-term profit gained from loaning out players, the brief flirtation with union last year cost Wigan dear, with Va'aiga Tugamala being converted back to his original code and Henry Paul, Jason Robinson and Gary Connolly reporting back in weary condition after their back-to-back seasons.

Eric Hughes, the Wigan coach, said: "Both Connolly and Paul brought back injuries from playing union, while Tugamala [now with Newcastle] and Robinson both looked jaded when they got back to Central Park. Players should decide which game

they are going to play. I appreciate that a great deal of money is involved, but there is more to consider than that."

Connolly, selected in the centre for the home match against London Broncos last night, might require corrective knee surgery for a condition aggravated at Harlequins, while neither Robinson nor Paul, who had missed five matches before his planned return last night, especially benefited from their short stint with Bath, other than in monetary terms.

Two months after Paul Kolo was signed by Wigan, ostensibly as a replacement for Tugamala, the club is still awaiting a work permit for the Tongan after an application was submitted several weeks ago. "We just have to be patient," Jack Robinson, the Wigan chairman, said.

In a series of moves involving first-division clubs, Swinton Lions signed Jimmy Velkoso, a £45,000-listed Tongan centre, from Leigh Centurions, in exchange for

Steve Gibson and John Gunn and a cash adjustment. Leigh have also signed Lathan Tawhai, a New Zealand scrum half, from Keighley Cougars.

Paul Dixon is returning to Huddersfield Giants, his home-town team, on a free transfer from Sheffield Eagles. Dixon, 34, the former Great Britain back-row forward, has signed a deal until the end of the season at the club where he began his career.

Warrington Wolves have re-signed Tony Thorniley, their former wing, on loan from struggling Widnes Vikings. The bottom-placed first division club has failed in attempts to sign Darren Wright, from Sale rugby union club, and Andy Currier, who is on loan from Warrington at Workington Town.

Events of last Saturday were now flushed from our system. Yet the physical scars linger, and with Robbie Paul and Sonny Nickle laid up for possibly six weeks, Bradford must cope without two key players.

The Bradford crowd will comfortably be the largest of the day and could exceed the 17,360 for the match against Wigan last season. Bradford's biggest for 23 years. Nevertheless, Bradford are not alone. Nine of the 12 Super League clubs have increased their attendances this season, including Salford Red Devils, who have doubled their support from the first division last year to more than 5,000, an average that should be boosted by the visit of Leeds Rhinos. Salford, upbeat at the Willows for 15 months, retain the side that beat Wigan two weeks ago.

is essential to their chances of retaining the Super League. They were beaten 50-22 at Odsal last June, when the title looked to be headed Wigan's way. Less than a year on, there is little argument that St Helens and Bradford are in a league of their own.

The Odsal crowd will comfortably be the largest of the day and could exceed the 17,360 for the match against Wigan last season, Bradford's biggest for 23 years. Nevertheless, Bradford are not alone. Nine of the 12 Super League clubs have increased their attendances this season, including Salford Red Devils, who have doubled their support from the first division last year to more than 5,000, an average that should be boosted by the visit of Leeds Rhinos. Salford, upbeat at the Willows for 15 months, retain the side that beat Wigan two weeks ago.

St Helens, still without Alan Hunte, expect to be unchanged for a match that



Robson has learnt to live with, and now thrives on, the unrelenting pressure that comes with being coach of the biggest club in the world

Winning battle to stay sane in Spain

BOBBY ROBSON

THE FACE OF FOOTBALL

By Oliver Holt

Bobby Robson is laughing, staring at a Spanish newspaper and at the faces gazing back at him from the front page. There is a picture of Jose Luis Nunez, the Barcelona president, on one side, a picture of Lorenzo Sanz the Real Madrid president, on the other. Above. At the end of next month, they will contest the Spanish Cup final.

"Open Fire,"

It is the sheer madness of his life in the battle zone that seems to amuse the Barcelona coach: the headlines, the children clambering around his ear, the club flags fluttering from buses, the fact that every city-centre hotel is full to bursting this weekend. The descent into obsession in this elegant Catalan city has embraced him now.

When Robson first took charge of the club last summer, the hexa-blessed him, but now it almost cradles him in its excitement and its frenzy.

In fact, yesterday, despite all the recent speculation that he was Everton-bound and that Louis van Gaal, the former Ajax coach, was due to replace him at the end of this season, Robson was on a high. Real Madrid, Barcelona's great "white rival", are the opponents at the Nou Camp tonight, the biggest Spanish match of the year — and things are hotting up.

To illustrate his point, Robson stands up, sinks his feet into the carpet and begins stamping across the room to demonstrate what a solid start Barcelona made to the season. The best start in 33 years, he said. Then, when he has nearly reached a sofa, he wobbles his legs wildly. "That was a defeat," he said.

"Can you imagine if I was a manager in England and I had got a club to two finals and we were second in the league. The chairman would have me in a corner and he would say to him: 'Get this guy on a three-year contract or he is going to be snapped up.' The fact that they know that I am a decent fellow, an honest

character and not a horrible git would make that more likely. But there is no chance of that happening here."

"This is a place where you could have a headline, 'Barcelona Win 6-0 But Do Not Play Any Football'. I could get angry about that, but I just dismiss it. That is criticism of such lunacy that it is not worth getting upset about."

Robson repeatedly returns to the theme of madness. He tells a story about one of his predecessors, Rinus Michels, talking to him soon after Robson had taken the Barcelona job and banging his head with his hands to signal that managing the biggest club in the world can make your head explode.

Robson's mind, though, is very much intact as he approaches 65. He rattles off facts at will. Barcelona have scored 91 goals in 36 league matches this season; they have played 14 games more than Real Madrid because of their success in Europe and in the Spanish Cup: they will have six Spanish players in their team tonight compared with Madrid's three.

If there is a madness here, it is an intoxicating kind of fever, fed by huge doses of adrenaline, glamour and scrutiny, riddled with nervous tension but potentially more inspiring than ordinary life at any other club. Robson has been linked with vacancies at Newcastle United, Everton and Celtic, but none has tempted him away. The future is uncertain, but the possibility of a second crack at the league title next year and competing in the Champions League is too attractive to forsake.

"I would like to think it was 100 per cent that I would be here next season," Robson said.

"I have a two-year contract after all. But I cannot say that, I could in England, but this is different. There is talk of Louis van Gaal and they may see him as the future, but they say I have a contract and that I will stay.

Robson repeatedly returns to the theme of madness. He tells a story about one of his predecessors, Rinus Michels,

talking to him soon after Robson had taken the Barcelona job and banging his head with his hands to signal that managing the biggest club in the world can make your head explode.

Robson's mind, though, is very much intact as he approaches 65. He rattles off facts at will. Barcelona have scored 91 goals in 36 league matches this season; they have played 14 games more than Real Madrid because of their success in Europe and in the Spanish Cup: they will have six Spanish players in their team tonight compared with Madrid's three.

"This is a place where you could have a headline, 'Barcelona Win 6-0 But Do Not Play Any Football'. I could get angry about that, but I just dismiss it. That is criticism of such lunacy that it is not worth getting upset about."

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THE TIMES

weekend

SATURDAY MAY 10 1997

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and her
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RK

A century has passed since Oscar Wilde's release from Reading Gaol. Peter Ackroyd recalls the final, broken years

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Wilde with Lord Alfred Douglas, Naples, 1897. "He was no longer an artist. When he ceased to write, too, he lost any ability to dominate his own life. He sat in cheap cafés, and watched the people pass; he let the waters of the world close over his head"

The killing of Oscar

Oscar Wilde, with some justification, proclaimed himself to be a lord of language; but there came a time when he was no longer master of his own life. He went from poetry to prose. He went from prose to drama. And then he went to prison. The burden of those two sad years is to be found in that great dirge to fate, *The Ballad of Reading Gaol*; he ended, as he had begun, with poetry. But if each man kills the thing he loves, then surely Oscar Wilde may be accused of killing himself. He left that gaol on May 19, a century ago, only to enter the prison of his own identity.

His first days of freedom were gay enough. He spoke of Dante, and of his desire to spend six months with the Jesuits; this retreat would have

been more unhealthy than a prison cell and, fortunately, his pious request was denied. Instead, he travelled to Dieppe under the *nom de plume* of Sebastian Melmoth, named after that great outcast of Gothic fiction known as Melmoth the Wanderer. In fact, he did remain, to his contemporaries, something of a fictional monster. Even in France he was shunned by Sickert and cut by Beardsley. He was insulted by restaurant proprietors, and treated by passing English tourists as a cross between Jack the Ripper and the Anti-Christ. They even

spat at him. Like some pantomime harlequin, he was attacked by the clowns.

In these early days, he told André Gide, the French man of letters, that "my life is like a work of art. An artist never starts the same thing twice". Yet he was not averse to repeating his old mistakes and, within a few months of his release from prison, he had returned to Lord Alfred Douglas ("Bosie"). He had been the cause of all Wilde's woe, and his father, Lord Queensberry, began the fatal process of trial and imprisonment by publicly accusing Wilde of being a

"sodomite" — by which no doubt he meant sodomy. Yet Douglas and Wilde were now reunited in their old circle of fire; he was considered by his friends to be "quite mad" in this but, as always, Wilde had a marvellous reply. "I quite agree that all men of genius are insane, but you forget that all sane people are idiots."

The two men moved to Naples, where they wrote sonnets and chased boys. But they could never have remained together for long; it was part of the symmetry of Wilde's fate that he needed "Bosie" when the younger man no longer

needed him. His sonnets were not enough.

The plight of Wilde's wife, Constance, has often been forgotten amid the splendour of his folly; she had been forgotten and humiliated by her husband, she had fled to Genoa with their two children in order to escape the stain of the scandal hovering about her house. But she never abandoned him or, indeed, ceased to love him; she provided him with an allowance which, of course, he squandered.

Constance her husband never met after his release; she died in April 1898 after an

operation on her spine, but there is no doubt that Wilde also helped to wield the knife. After returning from Naples to Paris, the city he had adopted as his own, by degrees Wilde became a solitary exile. He was endlessly susceptible to slights, eager for company but too ashamed to seek it. His conversation was prodigal and marvellous to the end, and so great was his gift that he did not care upon whom he bestowed it. He spoke to waiters and prostitutes, conjuring up words and images as dazzling as anything he had contrived in the drawing rooms of London. Yet he

could no longer write; whether out of fear, or indolence, he never chose to repeat his old success. He proclaimed that he had lost "joy" in writing, but it would also be true to say that he had lost his genius. He was free in the sense that his former triumphs had been forgotten, but he was no longer an artist. When he ceased to write, too, he lost any ability to dominate his own life. He sat in cheap cafés, and watched the people pass; he let the waters of the world close over his head.

For a while he deserted the boulevards of Paris to travel south and spend three months with the notorious publisher and writer Frank Harris near Cannes, at Harris's own urgent invitation: it was a case of the unspeakable pursuing the

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Everybody has a weakness. With many people it is drink or food, or clothes. With Tony Blair it seems to be ties: with his wife, shoes: with his children. Manchester United duvets. My own weakness is for neither ties nor shoes nor bedding, in all of which I have tastes most accurately described by the brutal word "boastandard". My weakness is for anything half-aimed at my desire for intellectual self-improvement. I am actually not stupid. But in my quest to become less not-stupid, I behave like a fool. Falling for the idea that merely to possess something is immediately to gain the benefits it can potentially bestow is the most basic shopping error going.

As soon as I graduated in 1989, I decided for some reason that I

ought to take an A level in Mathematics. This was bizarre. I already had three A levels and I had just come into possession of a degree I choose my words carefully, and partly because I felt I had done nothing really to earn that qualification. I decided I needed another one. I managed to convince myself that my education would not be complete until I had become more numerate. So I paid £200 to enrol at the Rapid Results Correspondence College. A while later, a large packet came in the post. The packet contained half a dozen beige-coloured exercise books full of sums.

Confidently, arrogantly, pencils sharpened, I opened the first exercise book. I had assumed I might run into trouble on about book five — and yet these sums on

SERIOUS SHOPPING

page one of book one seemed very difficult indeed. Difficult as in impossible. I checked the cover to make sure it was book one. It was. After about three minutes of staring at these opening sums, I decided to try again later, when I was in a better frame of mind. I closed the book, never, inevitably, to reopen it.

That book, and the others, remained in a corner of the repulsive bedsit I then lived in for a year. When I moved to a flat, they came too. When I moved again, five years later, I threw them out. I still have little facility for mathematics beyond mental arithmetic, at which I am quite

SELF-IMPROVEMENT



ROBERT CRAMPTON

good. My quite good mental arithmetic in this case tells me that I wasted £200.

Around the same time, 1989, I decided to learn Spanish. I bought

a set of Linguaphone tapes, again for about £200. I cannot remember now where all these £200s were coming from — I had no income worth the name. I must have gone into debt. Tragically, to run up debts on sums you can't do and tapes you can't understand. I would have been better off buying some nice ties, or shoes, though I would have drawn the line at a Manchester United duvet.

The equivalent for me now, calculating inflation and increased earnings, would be to spend about £2,000 on something that I then put in a corner of the room to accumulate dust — an idea which makes me shudder. But such was

my commitment to turning myself into renaissance man. I was also, I am sure, subconsciously trying to prolong my student existence and avoid earning a living — paradoxically by spending the money that I had deferred earning.

I still have the tapes in my cassette collection, along with the Buzzcocks and Stiff Little Fingers and all the other stuff I don't play. There are seven Spanish tapes — six hardline and one soft introductory one. Sometimes I think even now, before a long car or train journey, or when I am at a loose end in the evening, I should pop on that Spanish Linguaphone tape. I never do. I listened to the first five minutes of the first side of the supposedly-easy tape, once, in the spring of 1990. I cannot remember one word of it. I wonder now what

the Spanish is for "another stupendous waste of money".

What else? Yes, like Garry Kasparov, I too play chess against a computer. Unlike him, I can barely operate the program, let alone beat it. My computer came in, again, at close on another £200.

Sometimes, I do succeed in turning the computer on — and it then beats me in about 20 moves at level one (there are eight). When it beats me, the computer says, in its robotic voice: "Why? Are You Still. So. Crap?" Humiliating to have a machine talk to you like that, especially if there are other people around to overhear. But it serves to spur me on to greater efforts, as I clamber about in the foothills searching for that shopping shortcut to the intellectual heights.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DES JENKIN

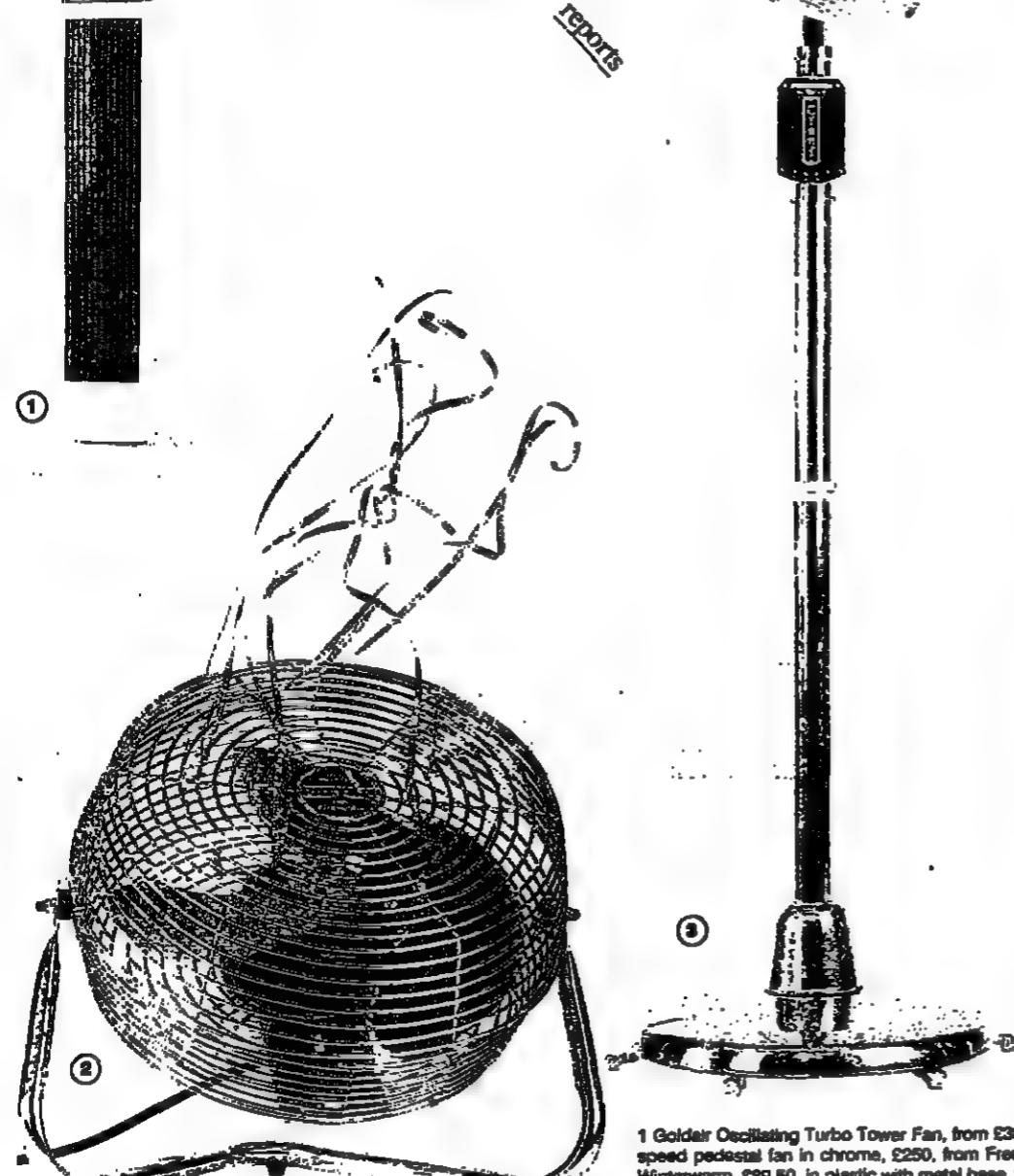
Wind instruments

As summer temperatures arrive in Britain ever earlier, fans are fast becoming an annual seasonal sell-out. As the market grows, so does the choice — from the fashionable heavy-duty "air circulators" imported from America to a brand new range of colourful children's fans from Fisher Price.

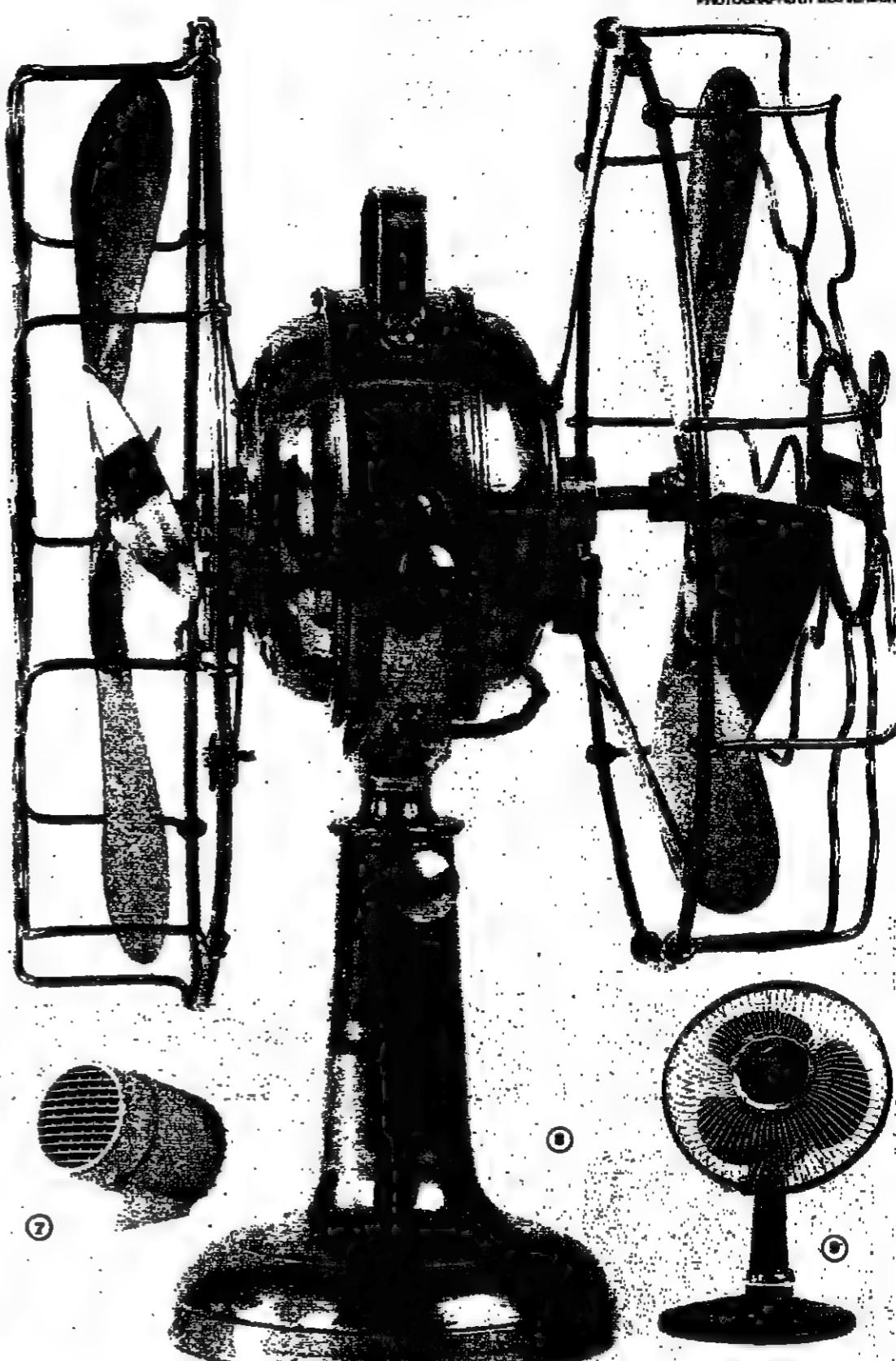
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1 Goldair Oscillating Turbo Tower Fan, from £39.50, from John Lewis (0171-229 7711). 2 High powered Patton Air Circulator, from £170, from Farago (0181-768 0162) and mail order from Closer (0800 132985). 3 Large Cini three-speed pedestal fan in chrome, £250, from Freud (0171-631 1071). 4 Honeywell Two-speed Turbo Fan in red and blue plastic, £14.95. For stockists call Honeywell (0345 680349). 5 Summercool Remote Control Fan by Winterwarm, £29.50, in plastic with metal base, from John Lewis (0171-229 7711). 6 Blue and yellow Fisher Price table fan for children, £29.95. Call Honeywell as above. 7 Mountain Breeze Personal Cooler, £26.95, from Boots (0116 260 6111). 8 As a decorative antique only (non-rotating), 1910 Marelli fan in solid brass, £1,200, from Themes & Variations (0171-727 5531). 9 Pito Classic Desk Fan in matt black and chrome, from £39.99 (Stockists 0161-681 8321)



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Attempts to turn Wilde into 'Saint Oscar' are ridiculous

Continued from page 1
irrepressible. A short stay in Switzerland proved fatal to Wilde's nerves, but on a subsequent visit to Rome he managed by good positioning to be blessed by the Pope on six separate occasions.

Fortified in spirit, as well as by spirit, he returned to Paris for the last time. He found cheap lodgings in the Hotel d'Alsace, complete with a bookcase and ugly iron bed as well as the famous wallpaper ("My wallpaper and I are fighting a duel to the death. One or the other of us has to go"). He breakfasted at nine on a roll and coffee; he managed some light reading, followed by a not so light lunch of mutton and two hard-boiled eggs. Then he began his promenade among the boulevards and the boys. His life had become a play, but with only one actor.

There is the story told by the opera singer Dame Nellie Melba. She was walking in Paris one morning when a man accosted her. "Madame Melba, you don't know who I am." Then had in fact met several times, in the wine-coloured days of his glory when he had dubbed her "Queen of Song". Then he went on. "I am Oscar Wilde, and I am going to do a terrible thing. I am going to ask you for money."

One old acquaintance passed him in a cab without immediately recognising him, and recalled that, "the sudden pain in Wilde's eyes was unforgettable". A young American blushed when he sat near him in a restaurant: Wilde rose to his feet, saying: "I remove the embarrassment."

He was now almost entirely alone. The man who had been the centre of a great social and cultural world found himself invisible. He was no longer surrounded by applause, but by silence. He had left part of his glory in his prison cell: you might say that he had become a *flâneur* and vagabond, not

by temperament, but from conviction.

By the autumn of 1900 he had a forced reconciliation with his wallpaper, when he was confined to his bed. The cause of his illness known to the wise as encapillitic meningitis is not known.

One of his more recent biographers, Richard Ellmann, has suggested that it was syphilis in origin.

It is possible but no means certain. It is more likely that he died simply because he had enough of life; once he had exhausted it, and now it was taking his revenge.

In any event he retained his wit to the end, principally by refusing to obey his doctor's orders.

He drank champagne and took opium, with liberal doses of chloral. Of course, he performed the principal function of an invalid by cheering up his visitors, but there were times when he was also amused. He told one of his closest friends, Reginald Turner, that, "I dreamt I was supping with the dead".

Turner replied, "My dear Oscar, you were probably the life and soul of the party."

He became hysterical with laughter.

O nly hours before his death Wilde was baptised into the Roman Catholic Church, on the perfectly sensible ground that the Anglican Church was reserved for the respectable.

Then, on a cold afternoon at the end of November, he died.

A few days later he was taken to an obscure grave, with the small group of mourners remembering, perhaps, lines from *The Importance of Being Earnest*: "He seems to have expressed a desire to be buried in Paris." "In Paris! I fear that hardly points to any

very serious state of mind at the last."

Nine years later Wilde's body was removed to the cemetery of Père Lachaise, where Epstein's famous monument has over the years been covered with the kisses and affectionate greetings of the world.

Could Wilde have accomplished more during his three years of wandering? It is very doubtful. He had already announced that his file could not be "patched up" and, indeed, he seems to have taken a certain pleasure in fulfilling an unhappy destiny. He had become both criminal and martyr and, therefore, the very model of a modern artist: deliberately or not, he turned his life into a form of allegory.

It is almost as if he had anticipated the extent of his fame, and was already living for the sake of posterity.

Now he has been rehabilitated as an artist and as a man. Those who know only his plays, however, know only half of his genius; his prose works, in particular his fairy stories and critical essays, represent some of the finest work of the 19th century.

Wilde mastered every literary form. He brought comedy back to the English stage, primarily by mocking the absurdities of the English. He invented the prose poem for a modern audience, and transformed the practice of literary criticism. He also proclaimed a novel stance in doing so: he was always struck by the value of appearances, and so created a theory of the artist as performer and public figure. He was in that sense a pioneer of the "modern movement" in art and letters, although he might not have enjoyed the

distinction. It sounds too much like a painful duty.

There may be the vaguest of reasons also to claim him for the cause of Irish nationalism, although it did once tell Yeats that the Irish were a race of brilliant failures.

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and his strength in his individuality. In this liberated age, he might even have derived great pleasure from posing as a heterosexual; as long as he remained artificial, he was content.

The attempt to transform him into "Saint Oscar" is, of course, ridiculous; it courts what he himself called "the supreme vice of shallowness"; and he can be said to have warned his 20th-century admirers with the remark that "cheap editions of great men are absolutely detestable". As for the recent attempts to "persuade" the Home Office to "pardon" Wilde, it is the Home Office itself which needs forgiveness for imprisoning him in the first place.

It is important, in the end, to avoid burdening him with the sexual freedoms and moral sensitivities of the late 20th century. He was an enemy of earnestness in all its forms and, properly, should be given the last word:

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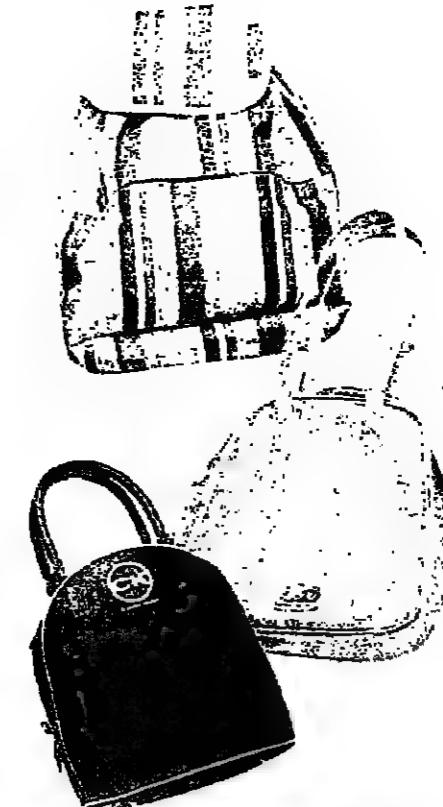
Britain's youth are going for a sporty look but they're not planning to break into a sweat, says Heath Brown

Be a good sport

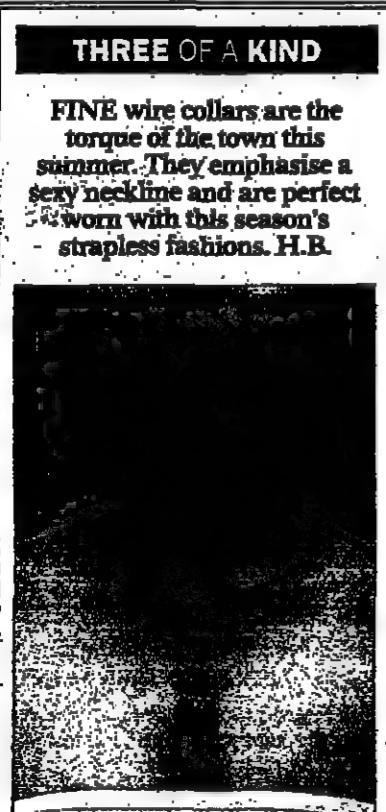


MAIN PICTURE: Navy nylon zip jacket, £295; white stretch sleeveless top, £90, Polo Sport by Ralph Lauren, 143 New Bond Street, W1; Harrods, SW1; Selfridges, W1 (0171-491 4967).
FAR LEFT: Orange nylon jacket, £122, Oilly, (0171-637 4142). Green cotton hooded jacket, £44.99, Pepe, branches nationwide (0171-636 8666). Three stripe V-neck top, £49.99, Replay, (0171-267 5532). Indigo patch pocket jeans, £60, Diesel, (0171-833 2255). Red patent flip-flops, £19.99, Converse (0181-838 4447).

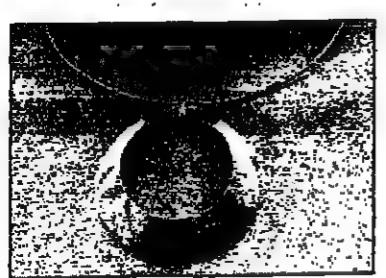
LEFT: White fine knit zip front top, £62.99, Replay, as before. Blue stripe T-shirt, £12.99, River Island, branches nationwide (0181-998 8822). Nylon blue and white airtex stripe skirt, £45, Red or Dead (0114-273 7827).



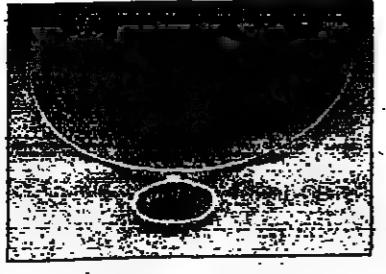
Top: Pink stripe leather rucksack, £18, Red or Dead (0171-235 5000). **Centre:** Blue patent leather bag, £23.99, Pepe, as before. **Bottom:** Green leather bag, £79, Calvin Klein, as before.



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Sportswear influences on fashion have been with us since the Fifties. Originally an American trend, clothes such as baseball jackets, sneakers and high school sweatshirts came off the sports field and into the street to become the ultimate in casual clothing.

Labels such as Adidas and Nike, once specifically for the sportsman, have become must-have brands for young fashion pundits since the introduction of fashion sportswear lines. Also proving to be the labels to wear are recognised designer names such as Ralph Lauren Polo, DKNY and Calvin Klein, who are all pushing their own "sports" ranges. Other labels such as Diesel and Replay have joined this trend and offer only "sportswear" that is pure fashion, worn by a crowd who would not dream of spoiling these clothes for sport.

Since the fitness boom in the Eighties, trends in sportswear have moved quickly, resulting in better quality fabrics as well as high-tech graphics and "go faster" styling with stripes and flashed logos. Nylon may be on the way

out in couture but in this genre it is still acceptable along with Lycra and synthetics. Shell suits are a definite no-no but tight-fitting T-shirts, bold coloured blousons and fleeces all work well.

For your feet, the original sneaker has come a long way since the Fifties. High-tech, state-of-the-art trainers have brought a new dimension to sports footwear.

There are four looks to choose from: the classic white tennis shoe, such as the Green Flash from Dunlop; cushion-soled ultra-graphic multi-use trainers (Nike, Adidas and Diesel are current favourites); platform and wedge fashion trainers; and the new summer-cool slip-on mules and flip-flop thongs.

The essential accessory is a sports bag — but in a bright colour, not black or white — with subtle flashed sports motifs on rucksacks, shoulder-bags and small holdalls.

Photographs by Richard Burns. Hair and make-up by Sally Kvalheim for Jo Hansford (0171-495 7774). Styling by Amanda Uppal



ABOVE: Chanel trainers, £315, Chanel, 26 Old Bond Street, W1 (0171-235 6631). **RIGHT: Top:** white platform trainers, £29.99, Faith, branches nationwide (0800 289 297). **Centre:** Navy and white star trainers, £39.99, Converse, Office, 57 Neal Street, WC2 (0181-838 4447). **Bottom:** Classic white trainers, £85, Polo Sport by Ralph Lauren, as before



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Our May Issue's Full Of Delicious Tips.

GOOD FOOD GALORE

Great Bank Holiday menus, classic Normandy dishes and irresistible golden-topped grattins are just some of over 80 mouth-watering recipes in our May issue.

GOOD FOOD ON AIR

We follow Sophie Grigson's new series, *Taste of the Times*; we've the start of *MasterChef 1997*; and we've a guide to your favourite food programmes.

GOOD FOOD AND DRINK ADVICE

Part Two of our wine course has more grape varieties and how to spot faults. And we steer you through food scares and conflicting advice on children's foods.

GOOD FOOD: NEVER GO WITHOUT IT

You'll find an 8-page guide to the best food in New York; a chance to win a dream kitchen; and more of Ainsley Harriott's collectable cook cards.

Stephen Anderton on the new biological accelerators that can halve the time it takes to make compost

Meet the ultimate rotter

Have you ever wondered what exactly goes on in a compost heap, all that luscious collapse and decay? You may not want to think about it, but others make it their commercial business to know what rots what. And from this high-tech approach to rot come the new compost accelerators, which can halve the time it takes us to produce well-rotted garden compost.

The traditional way to speed up composting was to add nitrogen, cheaply available in the form of sulphate of ammonia, sprinkled between the layers. Cheapest of all was peeing on it after *News of Ten*, in the last permutation before locking up for the night. Well why not? It's no worse than cultivating great steaming heaps of horse manure.

A little lime helped too, to stop things becoming too acidic; it for the bacteria to do their work. A thin (and I mean thin) sprinkling of soil between layers was also thought to help, because it added to the general volume of bacteria present, though they were mostly those which live at soil temperature, rather than the 50C-60C desirable at the epicentre of a rampant compost heap.

This product Garotta has been around for years,

an accelerator in powder form developed in the lime-and-nitrogen tradition, for springing on to the growing heap. And, perhaps, the best accelerator of all has always been turning the heap — bringing the cooler, drier edges into the centre and introducing them to the bacterial frenzy at the core, like Christians to the lions. Bless them, those little bacteria do like their oxygen to thrive and rot things down.

Deprive them of that, and the decay becomes anaerobic, a hundred times slower, and distinctly smelly.

In the past three years a new kind of compost accelerator has appeared, which works biologically. Instead of waiting for the microbes in a compost heap to multiply and begin the work of rotting the contents, you can now water on a latent cocktail of the most useful microbes. Biotal, the

minutes, creating a lot of heat. And every 10C increase in temperature roughly doubles microbial activity. Who'd be a lettuce leaf in a compost heap?

In a sense, there is nothing new about these accelerators. They are simply a massive local injection of the best natural decaying agents. There are no killer bugs here ready to take over the world, those little bacteria do like their oxygen to thrive and rot things down. Deprive them of that, and the decay becomes anaerobic, a hundred times slower, and distinctly smelly.

Biotal makes three kinds of accelerator, and there are good lessons to be learnt from their differences. One is for grass clippings. This contains mi-

crobes which work at very high temperatures induced by heat grass clippings, which are high in nitrogen. There is no need ever to add nitrogen to composted grass clippings.

The second formulation is a general purpose accelerator, chosen to have a wide range of enzyme activity to break down all kinds of vegetable waste at slightly cooler temperatures.

The third type is for leaves, and is not bacterially based. The woody tissues of plants contain lignin, which microbes do not break down. On

the other hand, lignin can be digested by compounds found in the gut of termites, and by certain white rot fungi, such as the bracket fungi which sometimes attack our garden trees.

Biotal's leaf composter is a fungal-based accelerator, and works at lower temperatures. Such fungi hate living with high nitrogen levels, and the message here is to keep nitrogen away from leaf-only heaps, with or without Biotal. For the same reason, leaves

collected with a lawnmower and mixed with grass clippings will heat up and suppress the fungal activity which would lead, fastest to leaf-mould. The leaf-and-grass mixture needs to be mixed into a hotter compost heap. But, of course, when the leaves have been shredded by a mower, they rot faster in a compost heap, because the enzymes do not have to penetrate the hard surface of the leaf.

This year, for those who prefer a granular compost accelerator, J. Arthur Bowers, which makes Garotta, has joined forces with Biotal to make New Biological Garotta. It contains all the goodies that were in Garotta, plus the bugs and the enzymes. It certainly

looks as if the future of compost acceleration is going to be biological. But however you compost, with or without accelerators, for optimum speed of decay you must always turn it regularly, to get some oxygen in there.

Last season I tried Biotal Compost Maker for Grass in my Green Joanna compost bin and, astonishingly, it ate every last scrap of waste this household could produce, including the lawn clippings of a drought season. It just never seemed to get full up.

• *New Biological Garotta costs £2.19 for a one kilo pack, £7.28 for six kilos. The three Biotal Compost Makers cost £6.49 for most garden centres.*



Stephen Anderton and his prized compost heap, which was produced with a "water on" concoction of living microbes

DEAD & GONE.

DAY 1

DAY 2 - 4

DAY 5 - 7

DAY 10 - 14



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Cruising can grow on you

Introducing *The Times* gardening cruise to Madeira, the Canaries and Portugal

In a dry spring, and with the prospect of a dry summer, don't you long for a climate blessed with gentle warmth and rain? An island somewhere? To a gardener, drought can be seriously distressing, and to this one the prospect of travelling with *The Times* Gardening Cruise in November, to Madeira, the Canaries and Portugal, is a pleasure indeed. Stephen Anderton writes:

Madeira has an extraordinary climate. At higher altitudes it is cool enough to grow daffodils, which need a period of winter cool to induce flowering, but it is also hot enough lower down the slopes to grow a vast range of exotics. Hold close your eyes in the Blandy garden, Quinta do Palheiro, and you might be in Cornwall or west Cumbria.

Walls of camellias 20ft high flank the sides of drives, but next moment you are looking at South African "king" protea bushes flowering on the lawn, with blooms the size of small, red cabbages. Camellias grow hard and fast here, to the extent that you could prune them down with a chainsaw in old age, when they get rangy and top heavy.

Contrasts are everywhere: topiary in the English manner then, suddenly, the long-haired 6ft-tall dome of an Australian "black boy". Agapanthus are roadside weeds, and passion flowers of various species make themselves at home inside and outside gardens.

Gran Canaria and Tenerife are something else. They are totally unlike Britain, and I find them all the more exciting for that. In the Botanic Garden on Gran Canaria, fat cacti squat around like angry frogs. "Mother-in-law's chairs", the locals call them. Other more slender species wriggle up against the sky, frilled with spines, as if the snake charmer had suddenly ceased to play. Who needs topiary when you have these?

The southern tip of Gran Canaria is rolling sand dunes, a chunk of the Sahara jutting out to sea. And just inland from here is Palmitos Park, an oasis of lush growth nestled in a moist gully under barren hills. Here are the full gamut of architectural plants — agaves, aloes, prickly pears playing host to cochineal beetles — and all pulled together by vibrantly coloured climbers, such as the gaudy, orange pyrostegia "fire vine" and powder-blue *Thunbergia grandiflora*.



Exotic plants and fruit proliferate in the conservatory at Estufa Fria in Lisbon and palms, of course. The Canary Island palm, *Phoenix canariensis*, is everywhere. But there are so many other varieties, and once you begin to get your eye in the differences are remarkable.

Some of the palms carry their leaves clasped around the upper part of the stem in a striking "crown shaft", making a complete change of colour and texture half-way up the trunk. And the flowers, when they come, appear at this transitional point, hanging in a ring of yellow like a beaded grass skirt.

In Lisbon, the great latanier shade house at Estufa Fria has pineapples, and the Swiss cheese plants scramble everywhere in full phallic fruit.

But if nature triumphant is not your bag, respite can be found at the nearby

GARDEN ANSWERS

STEPHEN ANDERTON
replies to readers' letters

Q I have problems growing primulas and polyanthus on my balcony, although they grow well enough in the garden. After autumn planting they survive the winter then wilt and rot off at the neck. Are they too dry, or too wet? — Dr T. Coupland, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands.

A This sounds like brown core disease, *Phytophthora primulae*, which is a soil-borne disease. Slice open a root and look for the brown core to confirm. If take it there are no signs of vine weevils? Empty your tubs of soil and dead-plant and put them ... well, not on the compost heap and not in the garden, unless it is big and have prime-free places. Sterilise or replace the tubs and start again with fresh soil.

Q Pigeons are wrecking the planting in containers on my shady balcony. They have uprooted *Vicia minor* about six times, scattering soil — their revenge for me stopping them roosting. What can I do? — Mrs M.M. Humphries, London SE1.

A There are a couple of things you might try. Your hand-watered containers in shade, will offer a tempting place to look for moisture or grubs. If the problem continues, apply a thick gravel mulch and put chicken wire or plastic mesh over the plants until they are established. It may be just the buds that are tempting the pigeons.

Q Our beech hedge is 30 yards long and 8ft high. During summer it is infested with white beech aphids, making it sticky and unpleasant to cut. Is there a biological way of controlling these aphids? — Mrs D. Cairns, Faversham, Kent.

A There is no biological control for aphids which will work outdoors. Recommended chemical controls are dimethoate, pirimiphos-methyl or pirimicarb, applied when signs first appear in late spring. I have found that tar oil wash applied to the hedge in winter will bring regular infestations under control.

Q Why shouldn't pine cones be just as good as bark mulch? They are certainly more ornamental, permit water to pass through when it rains and break down only very slowly, which is what is required of a water-retaining, weed-excluding mulch. If that is

Readers should write to: Garden Answers, Weekend, The Times, 1 Peabody Street, London E1 9XN. We regret that it may not be possible to deal with every request. Advice is offered without legal responsibility.

The Times also regrets that any enclosures cannot be returned.

WEEKEND - SATURDAY MAY 10 1997



Emma Freud in the courtyard garden of her London home. "I have never been good with flowers"

DENZI MAINE LANCE

Jane Owen starts a new series on people and the gardens they grow

Keep it in the family

Broadcaster Emma Freud's 20-month-old daughter, Scarlet, is familiar with acid house, hip-hop, techno and house, thanks to the family's courtyard garden, which is overlooked by 32 windows, four of them belonging to a recording studio. When Scarlet plays on the swing or in the sand pit, the music booms. But revenge loudspeakers are planned for this summer, when Miss Freud, the writer Richard (*Four Weddings and a Funeral*) Curtis, her partner, and Scarlet relax in the tightly planted walled garden.

Once it was a derelict-filled yard of the Baptist chapel but, since Miss Freud converted it, it has become a haven from the busy, smelly west London street market outside.

The garden is a family creation. Scarlet's interests dictate the wall decoration, while Mr Curtis's mother, Glynnie Curtis, designed and built the garden from scratch three years ago. Scarlet's first word, tiger, is celebrated on one wall in a mural by Miss Freud's quasi-brother and artist Ashley Rye (unofficially adopted by Miss Freud's parents when he was "very young"), who adds an animal every time his niece expresses an interest — hence the menagerie of pigs, pigeons, cats, a cow and giraffe. These are joined by topiary box chickens and birds.

"Seven months after we moved in the garden looked like it had always been there," Miss Freud says. "Before there was nothing but concrete. Glynnie put it together, fast. During the summer we have every meal in the garden. We have not entertained a lot but we have had babies out here."

Miss Freud, whose second baby is due next month, used to grow vegetables at her home in Oxfordshire before beginning the family. "I haven't lifted a fork since I had my first baby," she says. "I think the same kind of nurturing and tenderness go into gardening as into bringing up children. They come from the same emotional source and so you swap one for the other throughout your life."

But Miss Freud's vegetable career was not an outstanding

ME AND MY GARDEN: EMMA FREUD



One of the animal murals painted for Scarlet by Ashley Rye

success. Once, when she entered 18 varieties in a local produce show, she came bottom in every class, including the one in which she was the only entrant. She was told that her sole entry parsnip simply wasn't up to show standard.

In the London garden, Miss Freud is responsible for the flooring, attractive yellow-grey Chinese slate tiles which cost considerably less than some of the reconstructed pavers now available. Paving is an unusual choice for a parent of a small child; most attempt grass in even the most dismal corner when children arrive, but in Miss Freud's words, her daughter has "never split blood".

Miss Freud's other area of garden responsibility is a long raised bed opposite the front door to their chapel/house/studio in which all the herbs grow: lavender, basil, mint, rosemary, parsley, sorrel, sage, bay, dill... although these are used for cooking, this is a skill Miss Freud will reveal little about. "When Richard first met me he said that I was the worst cook he had ever come across."

The plants in the rest of the garden have to be Freud resistant.

"I have never been good with flowers: they do not fire me up like vegetables. I don't have green fingers and regularly kill plants. I then have to take them to my mother so she can nurse them back from the dead," Miss Freud says.

alluding to yet another family member involved in the garden. Mrs Curtis mentions, without rancour, that her lovingly planted camellia had been killed off. She has since replaced it with an almost indestructible mallow.

"I overplant everything so that if something doesn't survive something else can take its place, meaning there are no bare patches. I plant fast-growing things like a passion flower alongside a wisteria, which will eventually take over," says Mrs Curtis, who modestly describes her gardening qualifications as "learning by experience during 45 years of married life in Australia, the tropics and here".

The beds around the courtyard walls, and the multitude of pots dotted around the terrace, are packed with roses, rapierised box, heathers, *Clematis alpina*, New Zealand flax (*Phormium tenax*), fuchsias, conifers and cyclamen, which have been chosen for similar qualities. Soil had to be imported from a garden centre.

Pale flour tiles and white painted walls around the courtyard give a brighter feel to this garden than seems possible with the high, terraced houses that cluster so close. But, in the narrow, enclosed corridor leading from the street, shade is inevitable all day, so Mrs Curtis has planted an almost Victorian-style fernery and stumpery. Various ferns curl their fronds above ivy, great pale evergreen-leaved bergenias and the tiny-leaved mind-your-own-business which scrabbles across a couple of picturesque decaying tree stumps.

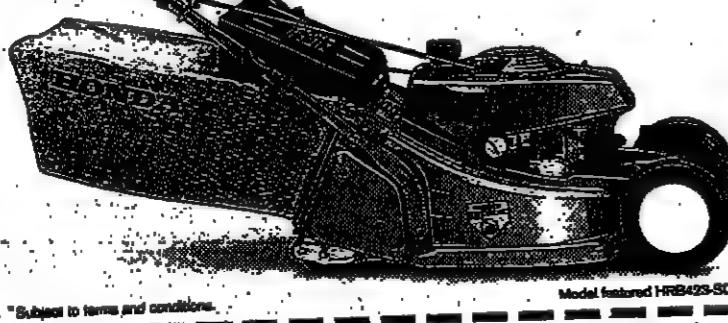
The planting is complex to give structure and colour throughout the year — Miss Freud's only request to Mrs Curtis when they were planning the garden. Much of the planting is in pots, which can be moved about and replaced as needed, and all of it is interspersed with flares and candles, three of them sprouting out of an ivy "candelabra".

It is a rare garden that perfectly meets the needs of entertaining parents and toddler daughters.

• Artist Ashley Rye can be contacted on 0181-780 2378

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Walk through history

Penshurst Place, near Tonbridge, Kent (01892 870307)

On B2176 from Tonbridge. Open daily to end Sept, then weekends in Oct, 11am-6pm. £4. children £2.75

The marriage of house and garden is unforgettable at Penshurst, where you feel you are walking through history. The main garden front overlooks a sunken formal garden which has been there in some shape or form since Tudor times. Great yew hedges provide the most powerful links, and they also provide the framework for this impressively large garden, making for a series of interlinking enclosures and views. Whichever way you choose to go, you will be led by paths back and forth.

There are always areas of particular interest to admire whenever you visit. If not now, then in the next week or two when the long peony border that has become one of Penshurst's most renowned features will be in flower, while the majestic herbaceous borders that run across the garden near the centre are burgeoning into leaf and there is a selection of early flowers. The presence of water has been subtly extended by the present owners, Lord and Lady De L'Isle, who have continued the considerable renewal carried out by his father. Not only is the level of maintenance now exemplary, but Penshurst has the atmosphere of somewhere that is going to be a joy to visitors for another 600 years.

Arduaire Garden, by Oban, Argyll (01852 203666)

On A816 between Oban and Lochgilphead. Open daily all year, 9.30am-sunset. £2.30, children £1.50

Today and tomorrow Arduaire is open in aid of Scotland's Garden Scheme and it could hardly have

OPEN THIS WEEKEND

chosen a better time of year. The west coast of Scotland has a unique magic in May, with a freshness and light you find nowhere else in Britain. At Arduaire it brings a sparkle to the garden's renowned collections of ornamental trees and shrubs, begun by James Arthur Mackenzie and owing much to the work of the nurserymen Wright brothers from 1971 until 1991, when they gave it to the National Trust.

The Scottish pattern of conifer woodland and shelter belts, here mainly larch, protecting the introductions from the Himalayas is exemplified. The garden's highlight is the collection of rhododendrons, and the blue poppies (*mecanopsis*) are not to be missed.

Hare Hill is a place of fascination, an enormous walled garden built in the early 19th century surrounded by a woodland garden. Visit now to see the banks of rhododen-

drons and azaleas planted in the wood by its last owner, Colonel Charles Brocklehurst, who gave the property to the National Trust.

It is a marvellous place to walk, with a blend of native woodland and the enriching colours of the more recently added flowering shrubs and trees. A sense of detachment is increased when you come upon the walled garden with climbers and wall plants decorating the brickwork and, at one end, an elegant white trellis pergola. Inside there is only lawn, giving an openness that is in contrast to the woodland paths and glades.

Hare Hill, Over Alderley, near Macclesfield, Cheshire (01625 822898)

Off B5087 between Prestbury and Alderley Edge. Open Sun 12 to June 1, daily 10am-5.30pm, then Weds, Thurs, Sat, Sun and Bank Hol Mons to end Oct, 10am-5.30pm. £2.50, children £1.25

Hare Hill is a place of fascination, an enormous walled garden built in the early 19th century surrounded by a woodland garden. Visit now to see the banks of rhododen-



Hare Hill: a place to explore

WEEKEND TIPS

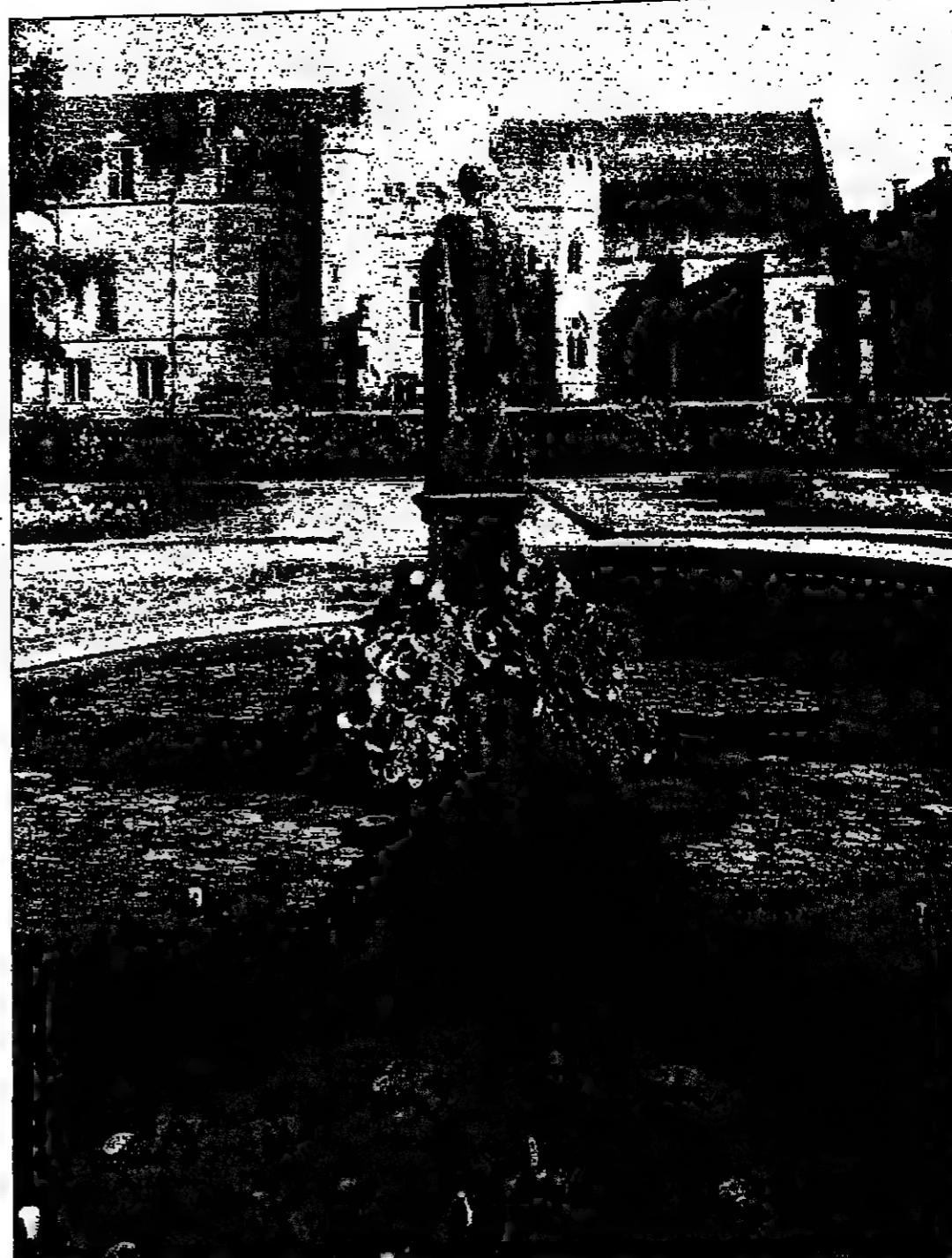
- Prune bush peaches of dead wood and crossing branches, to encourage an open centre.
- Sow pumpkins under glass in individual sin pots.
- Ornamental grasses and bamboos should be divided or transplanted as growth starts.
- Sow seeds of biennials (sweet williams, Canterbury bells and wallflowers), to be grown on in summer and transferred to flowering position in autumn.
- After flowering, reduce tangled growth on *Clematis montana* in positions where it cannot be allowed free rein.
- Watch for outbreaks of aphids on the new shoots or roses. If natural predators do not wipe them out, be prepared to spray.
- Trim back any straggly winter-flowering heathers after the last flowers have faded.
- Liquid-feed potted ilies with tomato food.

This is a garden for the visitor with a catholic taste in plants or, conversely, a specialist, because such is the range and quantity for a two-acre site that you are not likely to be disappointed.

The reliably damp Lake District climate encourages lush growth and, as you would expect on the sloping hillside, the garden is arranged informally with paths leading between banks of trees and flowering shrubs, or to the lawn which is a focal point with views to the Langdale Fells.

The leaves of acers are a superb feature at this time of year, as are the contrasting small-scale alpines and dwarf conifers that fill an enormous array of troughs. It is obviously a personal garden, the work of the owner Professor Hazeldine, which adds to the visitor's sense of enjoyment.

GEORGE PLUMPTRE



The main garden front at Penshurst Place, Kent overlooks a sunken formal garden from Tudor times

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The Property Protectors

Let your hair down in the tower

Hidden away in the Surrey commuter-belt is a fairy-tale castle for romantics everywhere

What?" I asked. "It's called the Deer Tower, Doe, a deer, like that. It's a folly. In Surrey. Go on, see what you think." So off I went — and wouldn't you know, but it *is* a deer tower. Standing 'on' a high knoll and reaching about 100ft above the surrounding countryside, it was built in the middle of the 18th century so that the master of the manor, a mile or so away, would have something pleasant to set his eye upon as he gazed from his great window. The tower now sits in its own 120 acres and the happy tenant may gaze back with impunity at the big house across the park.

The 20ft tower appears on a surveyor's map of 1808 and is described in its listing fit is Grade II as "a verdier's lookout or eyecatcher from the mansion". It is certainly the latter.

Surrey is prime commuter-belt country, and the notion of a rural pad near Guildford conjures up the image of something small and square and snug, most likely cuddled close up to the next traffic-bound Londoner's cottage. The Deer Tower, therefore, is something of a revelation.

Driving towards Shillingley, you turn on to a curving, unmarked track, and from behind a low rise the tower's crenellated turrets appear. It is a coy fortress, however, built for romance rather than repelling invaders: its tall front bow window (and the windows that punctuate both towers) would be much use against even crude medieval siege engine. Huge chestnut trees and tall yews sway nearby, carpets of bluebells surrounding their trunks in spring. This place seems a hundred miles from anywhere, not just a few from Virginia Bonomley's constituency.

Michael Taylor, an inventor who owns the tower, is looking for a tenant, though he is clearly eager to live in the place himself. It can be provided furnished or unfurnished.

A month's rent — with the run of the grounds and gardens and plenty of space to land your helicopter — will cost you £8,750. This includes furnishing, which can be changed to suit the tenant.

Do not, however, expect to hold house parties for hundreds. Part of the Deer Tower's charm is its scale, which is, if not small, then unimposing, cosy.

A paved walk leads you away from the drive to a stone-floured dining room and a snug, red Aga'd kitchen. You could comfortably fit 12 around the dining room table, and the kitchen has two sculleries, but the low ceilings keep the rooms from seeming over grand.

As you head upstairs the tower really comes into its own, and one of its finest features is the wooden spiral staircase (three full turns; 47



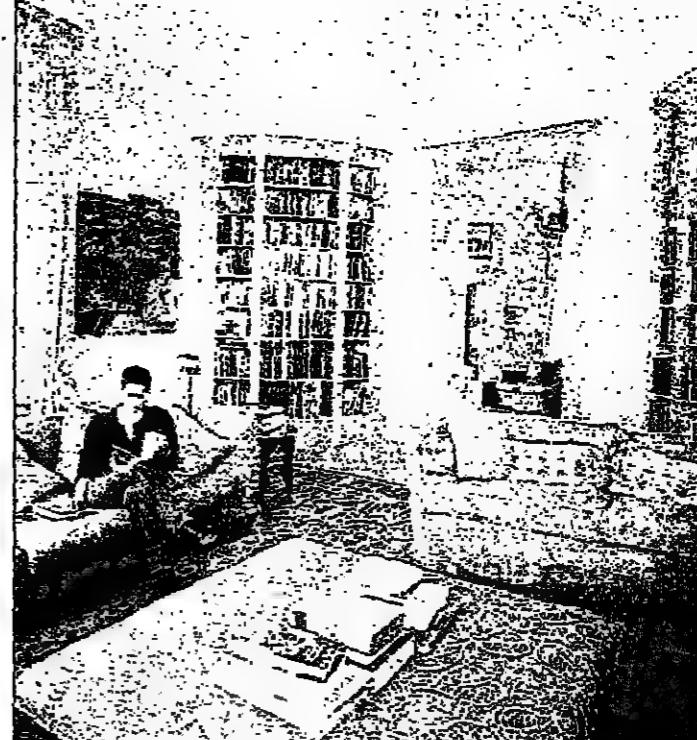
Built for romance rather than repelling invaders, the turreted Deer Tower has impressive gardens

steps to the top), its steps fanning out from a beautiful, polygonal central wooden pillar. The walls are whitewashed, pierced by bright windows and divided by a delicate curving banister. Such graceful architecture would make dashing upstairs to retrieve a forgotten object a pleasure.

On the first floor the stairs open on to an octagonal sitting room, its walls pale ochre, its strong plaster mouldings echoing the shape of the tower's battlements. It isn't a big

room, but its view is grand, with a window-cum-door leading to a formal French-style garden with an ornamental lake.

Many walls make many doors: spilling off from the sitting room are a larger, more formal sitting room, with more secrets hiding behind what seem to be bookcases, a tiny, octagonal antechamber and a library, which could also serve as a bedroom. The library, painted deep red, looks out over a very English garden: little paths and low



Bookcases in the sitting room aren't always what they appear to be

HOUSE OF THE WEEK

The Deer Tower, Shillingley, near Chiddingfold, Surrey. • Rent: £8,750 a month. • Shopping: For staples, Guildford is 12 miles to the north; Petworth, eight miles south, has 20 antique shops. • Travel: Waterloo to Haslemere takes about an hour. • Entertainment: Golf courses at Shillingley, Entron, Liphook and Hindhead — and, because there's space at the tower to land your helicopter, 18 holes at St Andrews wouldn't be too problematic. Parham and Arundel Castles are not far away for those who want to see the real grandeur that their comfortable folly reflects.

hedges and cherry trees. On all sides the gardens are splendid: unless you were a tenant wishing to do nothing else, part of the cost of running the Deer Tower would be keeping on the gardener who comes three days a week.

The library has an en suite bathroom, as do the two bedrooms upstairs. There is a guest bedroom on a mezzanine floor; the master bedroom is on the second floor. The latter has a terrace, and a bathroom and dressing room tucked into the towers. Both bedrooms are simple and comfortable; one of the pleasing things about the Deer Tower is that it is not intimidatingly grand.

For the finest views of the park, however, carry on up the stairs, past the master bedroom to the roof of the tower. Here, stretching all around — apart from the manor house across the way — is nothing but parkland, woods, fields where deer are to be found and a large lake, in which you may fish if you join the local club. And from this vantage point you can truly appreciate the beauty of the formal

gardens. You can also see the two garden pavilions; one of them fitted out as a studio, with tall windows and a galleried bedroom — perfect for visiting artist pals.

Back downstairs, Mr Taylor showed me a painting that the previous owners had commissioned before they sold the house. It is a detailed view of the house and all its grounds, done in bright jewel colours, with the two owners and the painter making appearances on the canvas. It reminded me of the work of the artist Kit Williams, whose *Masquerade* had the whole country searching for a golden hare; and that is just the feel of the place, a little magical, a little mysterious — you might almost believe that the stone centurion hiding behind a hedge will open his mouth and speak.

Here, little more than an hour's drive from central London, is a secluded, fairy-tale castle, where happy endings would seem to be guaranteed.

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With a booming market, even houses with drawbacks are selling and can be picked up at discount prices

Problem house for sale

As the housing market improves and prices rise, the dearth of available properties in many parts of the country has meant that problem houses and flats which have been bypassed for the past two years are now finding buyers.

The kinds of flaws that can make a property difficult to sell include having a noisy main road, motorway, airport or railway line within earshot; subsidence; a short lease; a sitting tenant or a public footpath through the back-yard, farmyard smells or army manoeuvres.

Most estate agents agree that whatever the bright property will always sell — eventually — if the price is right. But when the market slumps and there is a glut of property, problem houses and flats are notoriously difficult to shift. However, in a good market, when supply is short, buyers are prepared to overlook their

PROPERTY NEWS

THE CHANGE OF Government will have little effect on the housing market, according to Strutt & Parker. James Laing, head of the agency's rural division, says: "We recently forecast that property prices would rise by up to 40 per cent between now and 2000. The prospect of five years of Tony Blair gives us no reason to amend that."

THE MANOR HOUSE, a former home of one-time motorcycle world champion Barry Sheene, is for sale. The Grade II listed house in Charlwood, Surrey, has six bedrooms and a swimming pool. Price £725,000. Contact John D. Wood on 01342 326326.



can attract even larger discounts, but if you are living near a military airbase the noise could be intolerable.

En houses with the Channel Tunnel high-speed rail link at the bottom of the garden are now selling, according to Conrad Payne of Cluttons' Canterbury office. He says that in some areas close to the M2, railway banks being built for the link will deaden the noise of the M20 and house prices here may even appreciate.

Last year, David Parry of Cluttons' Maidstone office sold a five-bedroom 16th-century farmhouse, within 100 yards of the M20 and the high-speed rail link, for its asking price of £210,000. Away from road and rail, a similar house might have fetched 20 per cent more, he says.

In central London, the rumble of Tube trains under some houses in Kensington and Chelsea can wipe 5 to 15 per cent off the value. Streets such as Camden Grove, Peel Street and Bedford Gardens, which all run down to Kensington Church Street, have a Tube line underneath. A £1 million house may be reduced by £150,000. A similar disparity applies to houses and flats opposite council estates.

The closer to Kensington Church Street, the bigger the discount to take account of the busy road, according to Tim Wright of Savills' Kensington office.

A property on a short lease can be hard to resell, unless it is in Knightsbridge or Belgravia. High-street banks and building societies are reluctant to lend on leases with less than 60 years to run. But it can be good value for cash buyers, provided you get one which is extendable or enfranchisable, which means that the buyer has the right to negotiate a new lease after three years. This is likely to cost about 60 per cent of the freehold or long leasehold value, with 30 or 40 years left to run.

The London estate agency Chesterfield is offering a four-bedroom flat on the fourth floor of a converted period building in Ennismore Gardens, SW7, for £695,000 for a 29-year lease. If the lease were extended to 105 years, which would cost around £150,000, the flat would be worth about £925,000, says Matthew Kaye of Chesterfield.

Short leases are less common in the countryside, however. John D. Wood's Winchester office is selling the 14-year lease on a three-bedroom detached cottage on the Marquis of Bath's Longleat estate. Offers around £37,000 are being invited, although its freehold value is around £150,000. A sitting tenant with a registered tenancy would

knock between 65 and 85 per cent off the vacant value of the property, according to London estate agency Winkworth. With assured short-hold tenancies, value will be largely unaltered because the owner can get vacant possession within a short period. But you might be able to negotiate 5 per cent off.

A house with a serious structural defect, such as subsidence, is more of a problem. Building societies are not prepared to lend on such properties, which are often difficult to insure. Even in the current market, purchasers are wary of buildings that are moving. As a general rule, when a

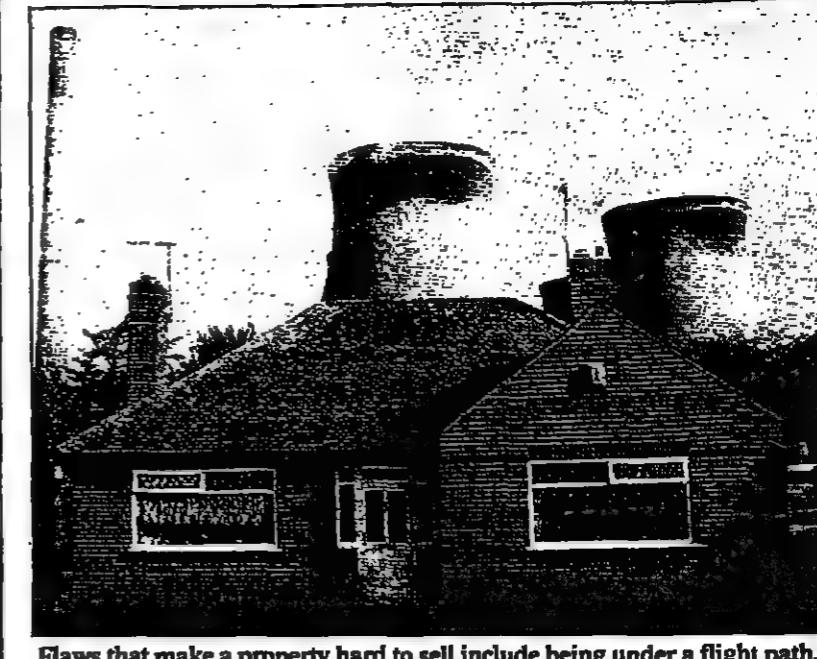
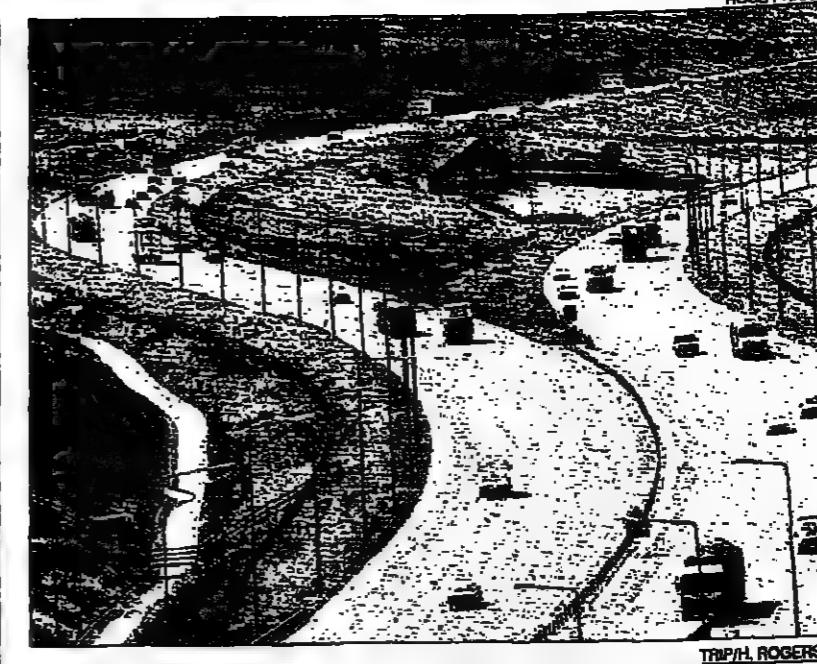
survey reveals subsidence, the property is taken off the market and the vendor's insurer pays for monitoring and remedial work, sometimes underpinning, before the house is offered for resale. But buildings that have been underpinned may be shunned by insurers, prospective purchasers and building society

The desire to move from suburbia to a rural setting is often dampened when it is realised that agricultural smells come with the package. West Country agency Merchant Petit says it had agreed the sale of a house near a farm, deep in the Devon lanes. The London buyer's surveyor made his inspection on a day when the annual muck spreading had taken place. When the offending odours were mentioned in his report, the buyer disappeared, and the house sold to a local buyer for the asking price. A pig or chicken farm next door, however, would knock up to 20 per cent off the value of a house.

An army training ground on the doorstep might seem a significant drawback, but Knight Frank's Hungerford office recently sold a 17th-century farmhouse in six acres at Everleigh, a Wiltshire hamlet, abutting Salisbury Plain. Despite tank, helicopter and assault troop noise, the house fetched £500,000 — about £150,000 less than a similar house a few miles away.

Some waterfront houses have their own flood defences and can be surrounded with substantial walls or mounds. The drive will have to be raised and provision made to stop drains flowing the wrong way.

CHERYL TAYLOR



Flaws that make a property hard to sell include being under a flight path, left, near a motorway, top, or having an ugly outlook, above. Sitting tenants, farmyard smells, public footpaths and army manoeuvres are also drawbacks, but many buyers are willing to overlook such problems

COMPETITION AND READER OFFER THE TIMES

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The Times, in conjunction with the exhibition at the European Academy & Accademia Italiana, Serenissima: the Arts of Fashion in Venice from the 13th to the 18th Century and in association with Alitalia and Italian tour specialists The Magic of Italy,

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For almost one thousand years Venice was La Serenissima, the most serene republic, leading the world in trade — and fashion. With more than 180 loans from private and public collections, the exhibition, at 8 Grosvenor Place, London, from May 13-July 20, 1997, is a celebration of the variety and individuality of Venetian fashion.

On display are the shoes with 22-inch soles of a fifteenth-century courtesan, the carnival costumes of the eighteenth century, paintings and prints, including the works of Pietro Longhi, illustrating the important role of crafts at that time.

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CHANGING TIMES

SELLING POINTS PONDS

Nothing is guaranteed to put a house viewer more on guard than things watery. A hint of rising damp, wet rot, gurgly plumbing or dark patches and they start moving towards the front door. It is ironic, then, that gallons of water poured into a hole in the ground has the opposite effect. Watch anyone step into a garden with a pond and they are drawn towards it like Pook Bear to a honey jar. If nothing else, a pond will help your house stand out in the jaded memory of househunters. Ponds can transform a bland town garden or drab backyard. They create their own microclimate, supporting moisture loving plants and mosses, and attracting dragonflies and butterflies. And these days, with plastic pond liners, you don't need to hire a concrete mixer.

A pond needs a sunny, sheltered spot, away from overhanging trees. Ideally, it should be a minimum of 35 to 40 square metres and between 40 cm and 76cm deep. Smaller ponds may suffer from algae, cloudy water and slime as the water cannot aerate efficiently. An algaecide can help or you could install a filtration system. If too shallow, the water will evaporate in summer and freeze in winter, killing or damaging plants and fish. With limited space, you will need to be vigilant; topping up the water in summer and taking fish



Ponds can transform a town garden or drab backyard, as in the film *Mon Oncle*

indoors in the winter. The choice is between a pre-formed or flexible pond liner. The former is easier to install but more expensive (from £40 to more than £250). They are limited in size and shape. Flexible liners can be made to any configuration but demand more care when fitting. Expect to pay between £20 and £50. In small spaces stick to geometric styles; complex, "natural" shapes can look like large puddles.

For both types, you must line the hole with sand before installing the liner. If you opt for a flexible liner, dig out a shallow shelf around the edge for marginal plants. Surround the pond with paving stones or bricks to shade and disguise the liner. Safety is also important, particularly with young children. Consider surrounding the

pond with looped wire fencing. After filling with water, let it stand for a week or so before adding plants. Go for a good mixture — marginals, floaters, oxygenating plants and, of course, the water lily. It is easier and less messy to keep plants in their containers. If adding fish, take advice from a reputable fish stockist and remember that they will need extra attention.

If space is cramped you can create a small pond out of any watertight container, such as a half-barrel or old sink. Add pebbles or stones and a few marginal or dwarf fishes.

Keep an eye on your pond. Leaves, shallow water and shade will turn it into a sludgy, green slime — almost as bad as rising damp and wet rot.

HELEN PICKLES

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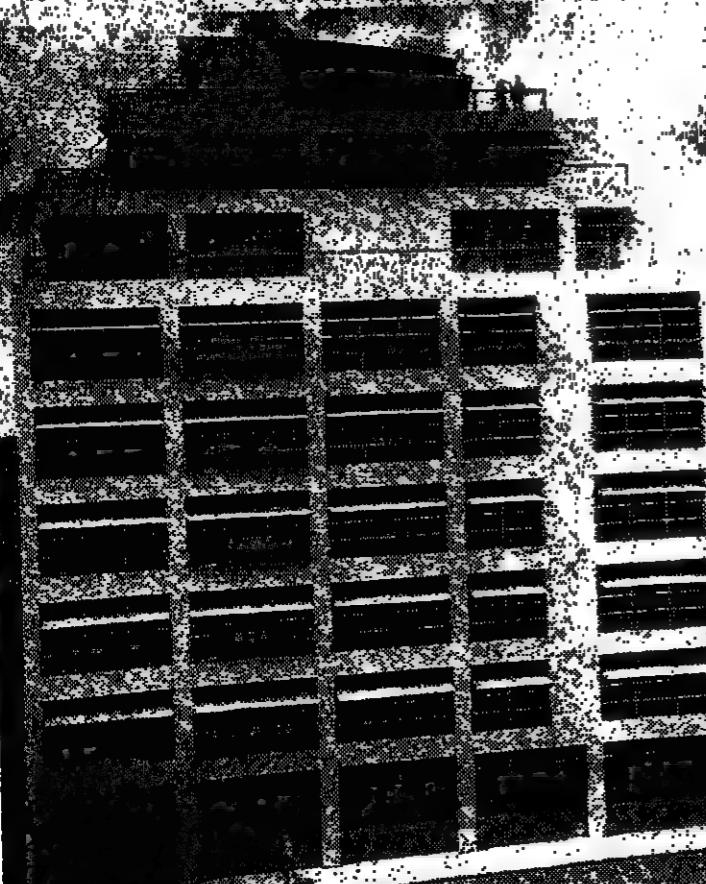
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Rural Britain is preparing for the summer invasion of townies, most of them blissfully unaware of the grim realities of country living

I fling my arms wide to welcome them, prepare to kiss them fleetingly on both cheeks, brace myself to tell them how marvellous it is to see them. The darling luvvies of May are out of winter hibernation and on their way to the country. I think they should receive a truly rural welcome.

It was reported in this newspaper a couple of weeks ago that a couple of smart London clubs, teams of "media movers and shakers", are to set up branches of their West End establishments in the country. Just basic, humble places where a troubled soul can be at peace; you know, 30 bedrooms, a 25-metre pool, gym, squash courts and an editing suite, like all country people have.

The brochure offers "a warm dining room/bar serving wholesome, unfussy food". Real country cooking from the heart of England. Well, from the River Cafe cookbook anyway. It is the declared intention of these clubs "to provide an alternative to 'weekending'". In which case, where will they find any customers? Have you ever heard anyone of any style who admits to being a "weekender"?

Instead, they will dress their fleeting residencies with such expressions as "we

come down every free moment we have" or lie boldly by saying "we live in the country" when all they do is turn up for the best three weekends of the summer and endear themselves to all by clearing the post office of bread in a Saturday dawn raid. One of the best euphemisms was from an author whose byline says: "Suffolk has been her home, if not her dwelling place, for many years."

Will any of these movers and shakers ever move themselves away from the log fire and shake their minds into a broader understanding of what day-to-day country living is like? In case any of them feel they should, may I offer my itinerary for the New Country Weekend?

It begins in a car, ends in a car and much of it is conducted from behind a steering wheel. Expect the early stages to be slow. This, of course, is just what the harassed, creative type needs to unwind: three hours behind a convoy of caravans, mesmerised by the plastic flowers dangling in the broad window of the

lumbering mobile home ahead.

Families need not be excluded from the joys of travelling somewhere in the bottom of the 14 Sainsbury's carrier bags is the one bar of chocolate the children are allowed all weekend, and they want it now. The fruitless search and the resulting bad temper puts our intrepid traveller in the

DOWN TO EARTH



PAUL HEINEY

ideal frame of mind for the moment he can pull off the trunk road into the freedom of a leafy country lane — where he soon finds a massive tractor ahead. The driver will be so high in the cab that he will not be able to see you behind him because of low cloud. Strapped to the back of this tractor will be a sprayer, its

country living by arriving in a car. Instead, do the plucky thing and see if you can get down here by train and bus. This might take longer than the two days available to you. Do not despair if you have been standing by the roadside for two hours, wondering when the bus will appear, a kindly passing soul will tell you

arms folded like a nightmare insect. You will have many slow miles in which to observe the sloshing contents of that spray tank, wonder what it is and what it might do to you. Is that fine mist on the windscreen some kind of leakage? Why are bubbles appearing on the paintwork of the car? Even so, you do not

get the real flavour of Wednesday. So you get a taxi, and the driver will tell you in great detail how he had his own business, till the Tesco opened on the bypass, and the business rate finished him off.

But there are country walks to be had, and I expect these branches of London clubs will have this well organised with guided tours. Bill Oddis will be hired to point out thrushes and David Bellamy to highlight the flora before you tread on it ("I'm sure that garden centre outside Marlborough has some just like it. We'll stop on the way back"). But for the real country weekend experience, you should strike off and find your own haven of peace in an otherwise troubled world. Take wire-cutters for the inevitable barbed strands artistically draped across the footpath and check your insurance in case a four-wheel drive enthusiast loses it while trying a handbrake turn just as you have

one leg over the stile. Go in search of a wild flower meadow, imagining yourself into a Merchant Ivory screenplay as you float through the daisies.

This may take time. Finding a wild flower meadow needs a search party or a helicopter with trained observers. Instead, take as your inspiration the Bloomsbury group. Imagine how they would handle it. Ensure you have a large hat, are well versed in the gardening styles of Vita Sackville-West, take an elegant tea and prepare to exchange rapier-sharp, erote observations with fellow guests. But remember to raise your voice for your most crushing epigrams because the army helicopters will be on low-flying practice. Or that tractor driver has chosen the next field to take revenge on all things natural.

But never mind, the creators of these rural retreats, little bits of Soho midst the meadows, will have fitted every room with a Jacuzzi. Marvelous, as long as the water holds out.

■ Readers' letters are welcome on countryside matters. Write to Paul Heiney, Weekend, *The Times*, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN.

A pound to combat pounding feet

BARRY GREENWOOD

Gareth Huw
Davies finds
visitors will
willingly pay
for the damage
to Lakeland

David Bellamy famously described in 1981 the impact of huge numbers of visitors on one of Britain's most treasured landscapes. "The Lake District is being loved to death," he said. Now, 16 years later, the visitors are beginning to pay for their passion in the way he hoped.

One expression of the careless violence people do to the adored Lakeland — visited by more than 12 million people a year — is the eroded footpath, gouged into a trough by umpteen tramping boots.

Paul Kear spent last summer restoring degraded paths at Stickle Ghyll in Langdale using the ancient art of pointing — anchoring stones, iceberg-fashion, deep into the path to form a horse-proof surface good for generations.

Mr Kear's work was largely financed by a £1 voluntary levy on the customers of two holiday companies, Cottage Life and Lakesavers. So far the visitors have donated £10,000. Their generosity may hearten the unfortunate officer of The Highland Council in Scotland, whose proposal last week to charge walkers on Ben Nevis £1 for the upkeep of the paths and visitor facilities was first roundly savaged by recreation bodies, then thrown out by councillors.

The Cumbrian experience, where the newly formed Lake District Tourism and Conservation Partnership is co-ordinating two dozen separate repair and restoration schemes funded by visitors, suggests that people are willing to contribute to make good the damage they do to the landscape, if they are asked nicely.

Peter Jackson, the owner of Cottage Life, believes the crucial difference with the stalled Ben Nevis proposal is that the donations his customers make in Lakeland are entirely voluntary, and they are told precisely what their money is being spent on. Cottage Life even informs customers where Mr Kear is working, so they can stroll up and have a chat with him. This summer he is up in Langdale again.

Last year a few of Mr Jackson's 6,000 customers refused to make a donation. He believes those who



Paul Kear, left, with his assistant David Parry, reinforcing a footpath in Langdale with stones against the onslaught of walkers. The cost of the repairs was financed largely by the £1 voluntary levy

ticked the opt-out box on their booking form did so under the mistaken impression that they were in fact agreeing to the levy.

Visitors seem just as willing to pay a levy which the bus company Mountain Goat puts on its touring holidays. Last year not one person who booked with the bus company refused to pay an extra £1, used to fence off a stretch of one of the busiest footpaths in the entire Lake District where it passes through a farmyard.

Until now, walkers on the highly popular two-mile circuit around Buttermere have flooded in crowds of Piccadilly Circus density over the public right of way through Gatesgarth Farm. This summer,

Mountain Goat hopes to raise the additional £900 needed to complete the special walkway which will bypass the farmyard.

There is always a long list of urgent conservation tasks in the Lake District National Park. Nearly 70 miles of footpaths alone need repair work totalling an estimated £1.2 million. Much of the burden falls on the park authority and the National Trust, which work within tight budgets. The Lake District Tourism and Conservation Partnership saw a new source of funds, believing visitors would be willing to make a personal contribution to the upkeep of the Lakes.

The partnership unites the guardians of the landscape — the

conservation bodies and statutory authorities — with the people who make money from the lakes, including some of the principal hoteliers, and encourages them to work together. It is believed to be the only such scheme in Britain.

This spring the partnership achieved corporate status after a three-year trial in which it raised £10,000 for conservation projects. And Mr Bellamy believes its work is the appropriate response to his warning, which he delivered to a convention of Cumbrian hoteliers.

"I'm not sure if I was the first person to say those words," he says. "Perhaps I was. But I told them,

"Here you lot are, using a landscape to make your living, and how much of the money goes into looking after the environment here? Sweet Fanny Adams. How many of you ask for contributions? No one." So this is an amazingly good move, very good news. It's the way forward for environment protection all over the world."

The partnership has hit on a new fund-raising strategy with the local brewer Jennings. This summer,

patrons in Jennings pub will be invited to play a picture quiz — "Guess the Lake" — for 50p. The prize is a holiday in the Lake District. The money raised will support the £5,000 project to restore eroded grass around Castlerigg.

the neolithic stone circle near Keswick. Customers at the Regent Hotel, Waterhead, near Ambleside, also know the management cares. The hotel made a £500 donation to remaking a traditional packhorse bridge on the route up to Edale Tarn. Most of the £12,000 cost is being met by the parks authority and other bodies. Hotel guests are being asked to fund the £2,000 shortfall.

Striding Edge is a company which makes videos of Lakeland walks and is headed by Eric Robson of BBC Radio 4's *Gardens' Question Time*. An appeal it included with its first walks video, issued last year, has raised £1,500.

I found comparatively little oppo-

sition in the Lake District to the conservation levies. However several people I spoke to suggested that they might become an excuse for the Government to reduce or freeze grant aid, as has happened with arts funding.

John Tookhill, a national park officer, is sanguine: "In an ideal world we would receive as much money as we need to run a national park. 75 per cent of it from the Government, and then we wouldn't need to seek other sources of funds.

But I think the tourism and conservation initiative is slightly different, in that it is about people who come to the Lake District and genuinely want to contribute, yet didn't know how."



ON THE SPOT: WEST CORNWALL

Rural recommendations

Place: The cliff road, Portheleven.

View: Before you is an ever-changing seascape bounded by the Lizard to the south and the cliffs beyond Mousehole to the west. Behind, hard-favoured Cornish landscape, sparsely mantled with trees which bow before the relentless winds.

Appeal: The constant warfare between the untameable elements and a resolute coastline, to which clinging granite cottages and those who dwell in them. Aficionados: Anyone who responds to the above. The natives themselves come out to gaze at the sheer fury of the high spring tides.

Historical interest: A tiny, but busy port in times

gone by. Now a quiet, picturesque harbour echoing to the call of gulls. Guy Gibson, VC, the Dambuster hero, spent much of his youth here. A street is named after him.

Time of year: Autumn and winter to witness the awesome power of the ocean. Summer for an almost Mediterranean warmth and tranquillity.

How to get there: A394 and B3304 roads from either Falmouth or Penzance.

OS reference: 625255 (Landranger 203).

Nearby: Walk the cliffs to Loe Bar and Pool — the latter, locals say, is the mere into which Sir Bedivere finally cast King Arthur's sword Excalibur.

PETER DAVIES

Love songs with a croaky appeal



A reed bunting likes to perch on the fluffy tops of bulrushes

impression. They make their nest in the tangled lower branches of an osier or a tussock of grass, or among the dense jungle of oilseed rape. Their four or five eggs have a marshy look — olive, with dark spots or slashes.

THE BIRDS are also well-known for their habit of "injury-feigning" when they have young in the nest. If a predator arrives on the scene, one of the parents will put up a very convincing display of having an injured wing. It will flutter along a track between the reeds, trailing its wing as though it were broken, offering itself as tempting prey to a cat or a fox. It will adjust its speed to keep at a steady distance from its pursuer, and as soon as it is far enough away from the nest, it will fly off.

A number of birds do this — but the reed bunting is one of the most skilful performers.

DERWENT MAY

• What's about Binies — look out for the first spotted flycatchers in gardens and woodland. Twitchers — black-eared wheatear, St. Agnes, Isles of Scilly; night heron, Holkham, Norfolk; red-rumped swallow, Stoke Lake, Surrey. Details from Birdline, 0891 700222. Calls cost 2p a minute cheap, 50p at all other times.

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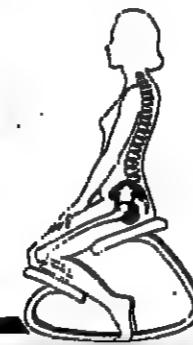
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AUTHENTIC TESTIMONIALS

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I was suffering from pain in the back and stimulation of the spine. Also I had a terrible pain in my shoulder due to an accident. Well, ever since I've been wearing the Health Bracelet I haven't had any back or shoulder pain. I also suffered from insomnia and stomach aches due to the stress and the pain. Now I sleep very well and no longer have stomach aches. The Health Bracelet works really fast, after having worn it for only two months, I felt an improvement. I've been wearing it for three years now and feel very good. Thank you P.D.

I've always worked hard on my farm, over the years, I developed so much tension in my arms and shoulders that I couldn't sleep because of the pain. I also started having problems getting dressed and functioning normally. After seeing so much about the Health Bracelet, I decided to order one, but I really didn't believe it would work. I had a friend who had a similar bracelet and it really did help him. I slept very well, and I'm not afraid to work. I've been wearing the bracelet for over three years, and I haven't had any relapses. G.B.

I've been wearing the Health Bracelet for four years now, and still can't get over how many changes have occurred. The pain I had from the rheumatism in my legs and feet has disappeared. I was so satisfied with the Health Bracelet that I encouraged a friend who was suffering from severe rheumatic pains to buy it. She told me the Health Bracelet relieved much of her pain. I will always be grateful to you. Thank you from the bottom of my heart. G.L.

I admit I didn't believe the Health Bracelet could work. I felt terrible pain in my back and legs. I ordered the Bracelet. I'd been wearing it for one week when I started feeling the pain go away. After one month, the pain was completely gone, I recommended the bracelet to several of my friends; they were all pleased with its effects. What's more, your company is honest and very reliable. A.P.

I had consulted four doctors for an inflammation of the joints; yet the pain persisted to the point that I could no longer sleep. With your Health Bracelet, I am in heaven because I now sleep throughout the entire night. Thanks to your Health Bracelet I am no longer in pain and I can now work normally. Thank you. R.L.

My friend and I have been suffering from stiff and painful joints for a long time. To our great surprise, after using the Health Bracelet for only two weeks, there was an unbelievable difference. I truly recommend this wonderful Health Bracelet to everyone. T.C.

In 1970, I broke a shoulder in a car accident. All that doctors could do was pin my shoulder. I couldn't walk with that arm anymore, I was in so much pain. For the past 7 years, I've been wearing the Health Bracelet and working with less pain. I never take the Health Bracelet off. I recommend it to all my friends. R.J.M.

I feel pain in my legs, my hands and feet numb. For the past year, I've been wearing the Health Bracelet and I can honestly feel a difference; the numbness is gone and my circulation is better. In the beginning, I really didn't think it could work. But now I recommend it to all my friends. T.F.

I've been wearing the Health Bracelet for two years and I am completely satisfied with it. It eases my pain noticeably. I could no longer go on without my Health Bracelet L.L.

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FOR WOMEN FOR MEN



I was suffering from rheumatism in my neck. My wife had a terrible pain in her arms due to an accident. We ordered two Health Bracelets, and much to our surprise, our pain went away. I no longer take the pain relievers or sleeping pills, because the pain has disappeared and I can sleep normally again. I also digest better and don't have intestinal problems anymore. My wife, Mary, is no longer suffering and is very happy. We have both worn our bracelets for several years and recommend it to everyone. Mr and Mrs G.

When I started wearing the Health Bracelet, my headaches went away. I also noticed a change in my rheumatism pain, and I am not as tired anymore. My whole attitude has changed as a result. I had a couple of friends by it, the pain just they were completely astonished. I believe in the Health Bracelet and I encourage people to get one. R.M.

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WEEKEND · SATURDAY MAY 10 1997

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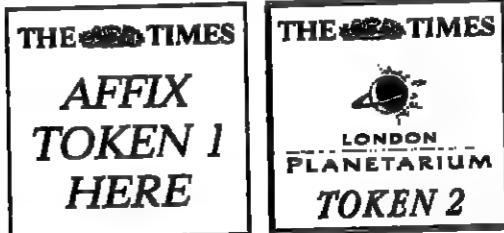
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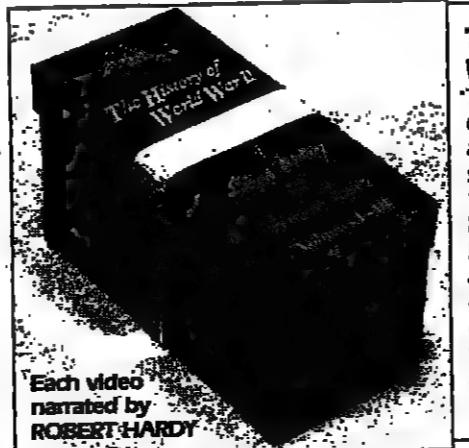
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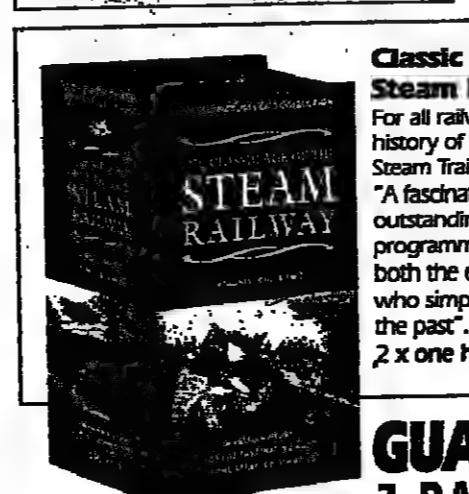
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Bare bones of a remarkable family saga

Ginny Dougary talks to Fay Weldon and her niece, novelist Rachel Morris, about their colourful relations

It is not hard to imagine these two women, almost three decades apart, as mother and daughter. They have been issued with the same flaxen hair and open blue gaze, one famously widowed by a Californian skin sculptor ten years ago, a resolute juvie to their chins and — most eerily similar of all — the soft, breathy voice of a little girl, in which the Rs randomly dinned in Ws.

Since both women are writers, the older, rather better known at this point than the younger, and much of our talk is about writing, one has the opportunity to be charmed by this impediment of regular intervals.

Fay Weldon is, in fact, Rachel Morris's aunt. It was Fay's mother who became a surrogate mother to Rachel and her two brothers when their own died, bringing up this new second family on very little money and in an atmosphere of steely asceticism in most unbohemian Essex. Rachel was 11 when Jane Morris, her mother — an unsung poet — died of cancer. Her father, Guido, a founding member of various artistic movements in 1950s St Ives, had disappeared when she was four.

Fay was the breadwinner, graduating from earning successful advertising slogans — memorably, "Go to work on an egg" — to writing successful novels, providing her niece and nephews with exotic food parcels from London.

It is somewhat surprising to discover that Fay's success and the largesse with which she dispensed its spoils were frowned upon by the rest of her family — her mother, in particular. "My mother was very frugal. Still is. So these comfortable things were seen as a sign of terrible decadence," she says insouciantly. "I was brought up with an apple crate for a bedside table, with a candle put in front of it to make it look nice. But it was still an apple crate."

"So you rebelled against that? 'Of course,' she shrugs. 'And to a major extent' Rachel adds, grinning. "Well, I've been a major spender ever since," Fay says.

I wonder how Fay viewed her older sister's children. Did their status as orphans change the nature of her relationship with them? I remember Rachel telling me, when we were friends at university in the late 1970s, that she viewed Fay as an older, much-to-be-admired sister. Were these feelings

sions to be made on the strength of a whim — one of which was the education of his daughter. She was four and in tears because she was about to be sent to nursery school, when "Edgar, who didn't like to be disturbed, came down in his silk dressing-gown with his cigarette holder and said, 'Why is little Margaret making that noise?' When he was told, he asked her, 'Do you want to go to school, Margaret?'" Fay recounts. "And she said, 'No' — and so she never went after that. My mother said that at the time she knew it was a major life decision, and the wrong one."

"Little Margaret" was Margaret Birkinshaw, who grew up to write romantic fiction — which she heartily disapproved of, masking her identity under the wild nom de plume Pearl Bellair — and the odd serious novel, the proceeds of which helped to support her first and second families. Her brother, Selwyn Jenson, was a prolific writer of detective novels. "He was handsome and had many wives, and used to fly in the Second World War," Rachel recalls. "He lived in great style and was very definitely wicked."

One would be hard-pushed to find a more colourful anti-hero in fiction than Rachel's father. He was the archetypal tortured artist willing to sacrifice himself, and all those who came into his orbit, to his art.

Perhaps it is a generational difference, perhaps it is in the nature of the bond — the expectation from a child that the parent will not let you down — but Fay can certainly talk about Guido with a great deal more equanimity than his daughter. Although when the Tate Gallery in St Ives acknowledged his contribution to the fine art of postwar hand-printing with a posthumous exhibition in 1995, not one member of his family made the pilgrimage to Cornwall.

Not long ago, Rachel was confounded to discover that her father and mother had continued to communicate and, indeed, meet up with each other for years after his disappearance. The couple wrote to each other three times a week, letters that never arrived on the home doorstep but were sent to the mother's workplace. "Jane didn't like people knowing what was going on," Fay recalls. "But it was fairly obvious, because suddenly Benjamin [Rachel's younger brother] appeared." Secrets and lies take root in even the most non-conformist families.

Guido was certainly an artist at inventing his life. Even his name was an invention to mask the banality of his background — born to a vicar and christened Douglas. He left that family behind but, as



Fay Weldon and her niece Rachel Morris. During Rachel's frugal childhood in Essex, her aunt would send exotic food parcels from London

Edgar Jenson		Margaret Birkinshaw	
Selwyn Jenson	Jane Morris	Fay Weldon	
Christopher	Rachel Morris	Benjamin	4 children

Fay points out, "he left many families behind". A few years ago, a half-brother turned up from Mexico who looked exactly like the two brothers Rachel knew about.

How are we to take the tortured artist's most notable act of defiance — taking a job as a guard on the London Underground, where Rachel eventually tracked him down when she was 16? He was probably the only guard on the Underground, as she says, who could read Latin, Greek and Hebrew. Fay recalls hearing him over the public address system at Victoria, "with his amazingly mellifluous cathedral voice. And he enunciated all the stations absolutely perfectly".

"Only a man would make that kind of gesture," Rachel says. "It was a kind of, 'Oh my God, the world does not appreciate me — I will sacrifice myself.' Fay says it was more specific than that: "See where your mother, Jane, and Gran [Fay's mother] have driven me — determined that I should pay them some money for these starving children..."

Rachel says, with some feeling: "But it was a stupid gesture." "It was a wonderful gesture," her aunt insists. "It was a crazy gesture, but it worked: 'Look what you have reduced me to — now you see!'"

Fay remembers him coming back to feed the children with a bag of bones — "There's a lot of nourishment in these things"; a story Rachel has not heard before. "Oh, my poor mother," she says.

Does it make her angry? She says it makes her feel very feminist. Her mother may have died of cancer, but what killed her, Rachel believes, was her pre-feminist values — the artist's muse as a living sacrifice. Jane the good girl. Fay the bad girl. One dead; the other alive. "It is just like a novel," Rachel says, sadly. "Fay decided she wouldn't be a victim of the values that killed my mother, but would change them — and she survived."

To the onlooker, there is a certain irony that Guido's wilful rejection of success — thereby convincing himself that the purity of his artistic

necessities of everyday life: all your moral and emotional responsibilities. You couldn't because the children insist that you stay this human being. But this certainly didn't diminish your work in any way. It enriched it."

"It's not often that one gets a chance to see that even very grown-up-well-known women can still feel keenly their mother's disapproval."

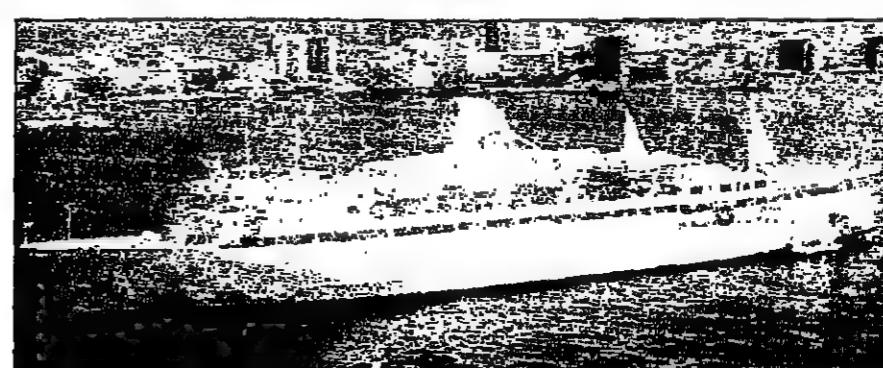
At the end of our meeting, just before Fay leaves to go shopping, Rachel turns to her aunt and says, "It's a funny thing, family perspective. When we were growing up, it was always 'The Amazing Fay' — especially from Gran. But I don't expect she ever told you that."

• *Ella and the Mothers*, the new novel by Rachel Morris (Seagull Hardback, £10.99).

• Fay Weldon is making a new series for Channel 4, *Big Women*, about the rise and fall of a feminist publishing company.

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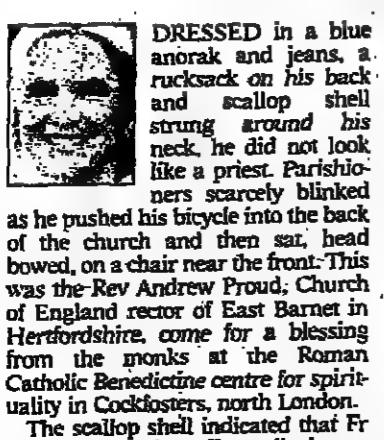
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Ruth Gledhill joins members of a Benedictine order on retreat in north London

Monks in a material world



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he said. "The place you intend to visit is a monument to the devotion of the people of God." As indeed is the centre itself.

"In the old days monks went into the desert; these days the desert is in the city," reads an appeal brochure from a couple of years ago. "We are monks living in a big city. That represents a big challenge to us."

The monks have deliberately chosen an urban setting to present the secular world around them with a chance to find inner peace and an alternative to the materialist struggle. But they are not aloof from the torment of the world. In his latest newsletter the prior, Dom Placid, a Dutchman, asks: "Is it possible to be both British and European?" He goes on to confess that, try as hard as he could, he has never succeeded in becoming British.

"What is worse, I have not even attempted it, because I have my own culture, traditions, language and mentality," he says. He loves England and hopes to stay here, but will die a Dutchman. "My advice to you is: be true to yourself. Don't try to be a Dutchman, you will never succeed," he concludes.

I left feeling closer to God, and happily armed with some useful new Benedictine spiritual weaponry, to be brought into play when an argument over the single European currency surfaces, or at the very least, on the rare occasion someone asks me to go Dutch on his word.

He went on to give Fr Andrew his official blessing. "My dear brother, as you set out you should remind yourself of the reasons for your resolve to go on this holy pilgrimage, and into Spain."

"What is the difference between a pilgrimage and a holiday?", asked Dom Anthony. "There is a big

community. "As for God, His ways are perfect; the word of the Lord, purest gold," we sang from Psalm 17 before the confession and a reading from Acts. There was another psalm, the gospel and the Creed.

Dom Anthony, the director of the centre, preached on the symbolism of pilgrimage. Fr Andrew, 43, whose wife Janice, a biologist specialising in plant research, was beside him, had been a volunteer for the centre's pilgrimage team and had taken a sabbatical from his Anglican ministry to go across the French Pyrenees and into Spain.

We were at a weekday mass where one of the monks, Dom Anthony, was about to send Fr Andrew off on his pilgrimage with the blessing of the

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Dream of drumming raindrops

Despite the tearaway boom of
Mammon and the mobile,
Malaysia's culture still excites

Over-impressed, perhaps, by watching a little French film called *The Scent of the Green Papaya*, I went to Malaysia hoping to see trim-composed serving girls cooking at the squat on a tropic night oils in woks fizzing over fierce fires, the drumming of rain on the corrugated roof of the kitchen. This, I thought, would all be easy and sweet: a solace. What I found in Kuala Lumpur was an overblown, scattered former colonial city in which there were occasional bastions of charm from the pre-colonists and steel age. Wherever you wanted to go was miles away and taxi drivers seemed to have learned their trade in the New York *barris*.

Shopping in the working-class Chinese emporia was fun. Eating, horrendous. It follows the ethnic composition of the country: Chinese; Indian or Malay (the last something of a racial jumble). The Malay are as the Victorian British described them: nature's gentlemen, but even the very intelligent among them are faintly hopeless. It may be the lack of aggression. The great thing, though, is that they are more than prepared to discuss the matter. Their Prime Minister, Dr Mahathir Muhammad, writes and speaks of nothing else: in the company of his newspaper articles and speeches, I whiled away happy hours brooding over the Thatcherite dilemma of a leader who is trying to insist that his people are the greatest on earth while excusing them for fecklessness.

The food, whatever its provenance, requires courage. I couldn't see the point sitting in a smart restaurant indoors when there was much more drama to watch from pavement cafes, whose standards of hygiene do not bear inspection. The Asian boulevard is not posing, in the manner of

The simplest way to enjoy yourself in Kuala Lumpur seems to be to get to Chinatown. The only sadness is that, as a tourist, you are expected. This has its compensations, but even so the eating remains hair-raising. I found the presence of strong fluorescent light tended to indicate a place which was likely to be cleanish, as though people prepared to be seen were more likely to be house-proud.

Here I met nothing but matter-of-fact kindness from anyone involved: in bringing me faintly recognisable food, even though the requirement that it be hot probably struck them as comical, because they were confident it would be delicious.

A week or so later I visited Kuching, in Sarawak on the vast island of Borneo. It was what a provincial centre ought to be: thriving and humming,

but far more manageable in scale than Kuala Lumpur. The Kuching river slides through the town, seeming almost more mud than water.

On the prompting of a local policeman I had met, I rented a

water-taxi for an afternoon, idling among fishermen and finally shamelessly gawping at one man as he sauntered out of his house down to the river for a wash among his moored canoes. My boatman then headed downstream to potter among the comically scruffy cargo ships of the timber port.

The crewmen evinced no obvious sign of caring that what their lives had gained in the happy-go-lucky they had entirely lost in privacy. Washing, sleeping and eating went on all about us.

During a rainstorm, time seemed to stand still: the downpour seemed to want to beat the river to a standstill. I was getting close to my dream.

Kuching, in its homely way, offered a deal of culture. There is a really touching police museum at the toy fort built by the Brooke family, which founded modern Borneo. It is across the way from the Hilton hotel and reached by water taxi. The exhibits were evocative on the period of the British counter-insurgency operations in the 1960s.

Kuching also has the Sarawak State Museum — founded by the white raj — which has become, like the British Museum, a museum of museum-keeping. Its collection of stuffed snakes, including the human bones found in the stomach of one of them, is at the same time grim and funny.

I cruised among the filing cabinets in which dozens of drawers contain the stiff little corpses of thousands of birds, still recognisably glorious in their fading plumage, each like a tiny grand duchess exuding the scent of preservative. Any one of them would have topped off a mad hat beautifully.

Here in the museum it is easy to imagine Victorian ad-

venturers, fighting disease and *ratites*, squandering their maturity in reliving boyhood pastimes among such exotic natural history and imagining themselves neither girl-sudden nor barking.

In the museum, too, is a beautifully preserved longhouse — a jungle home on stilts suitable for the original wild man of Borneo. And everyone you meet here claims to have a headhunter for a grandfather. One day someone, ashamed of the museum's quaintness, will seek to update it and blow its charm to smithereens.

I mostly ate indoors in Kuching, and was pleased to see that the manager at the Hilton had shown courage in banning mobile phones from the Chinese restaurant. Mind you, he said, it's impossible to ban mobiles from the disco: the young could not map out their night's galavanting without cellular networking.

The next stop was a beach resort on the island of Penang, where the guests seemed happy enough, though I thought it vulgar. It looked like a hot Butlin's. I got so grand I eschewed the pool for swimming with day-tripper factory workers in the sea, and only enjoyed the hotel's catamarans and my handsome room.

Several faces I recognised from the hotel had the same idea: down to the village for a decent Chinese meal, or to a good Indian restaurant, where the food was about one twentieth of the price of that in the resort. No microwave at these places, but a spoon each of fish, lamb and beef curries, their sauces elbowing each other aside around the rice.

Each day, the hotel's bus

THE TIMES travel

A castle
dreamier
than
Disney

Bavaria - 18



IMAGE BANK

FACT FILE

■ Malaysia Airlines (0171-341 2020) flies from Heathrow to Kuala Lumpur twice a day (once a week via Dubai). Fares to KL and Penang (with stopover in KL) start at £594 to Kuala Lumpur via KL £638. There are direct flights between Kuala Lumpur and Penang three times a week, costing £84 one-way.

■ Abercrombie & Kent (0171-730 9600) offers a two-week holiday to Malaysia from £1,439, including three nights in KL, seven nights in Penang and four nights' B&B at the Holiday Inn, Kuala Lumpur.

■ Other tour operators include Far East Gateways (0161-445 4521) and the Malaysia Experience (0181-424 9548).

■ The author stayed at the Hotel Grand Continental in Kuala Lumpur (£0 60 3 295 9339), where a double room costs £140 a night, including breakfast. In Chiang Mai, the Swiss-Inn (£0 60 3 282 3333) charges £120 a night. At the Penang Muslim Beach Resort (£0 60 4 885 2628), a double room costs £100, including breakfast.

■ For travellers seeking architecture and heritage, Khoo Su Nin's guide, *Streets of George Town, Penang*, is invaluable (£14, made payable to Janus Print and Resources, 120 Armenian Street, 10200 Penang, Malaysia).

■ For further information call Malaysia Tourism on 0171-930 7932.

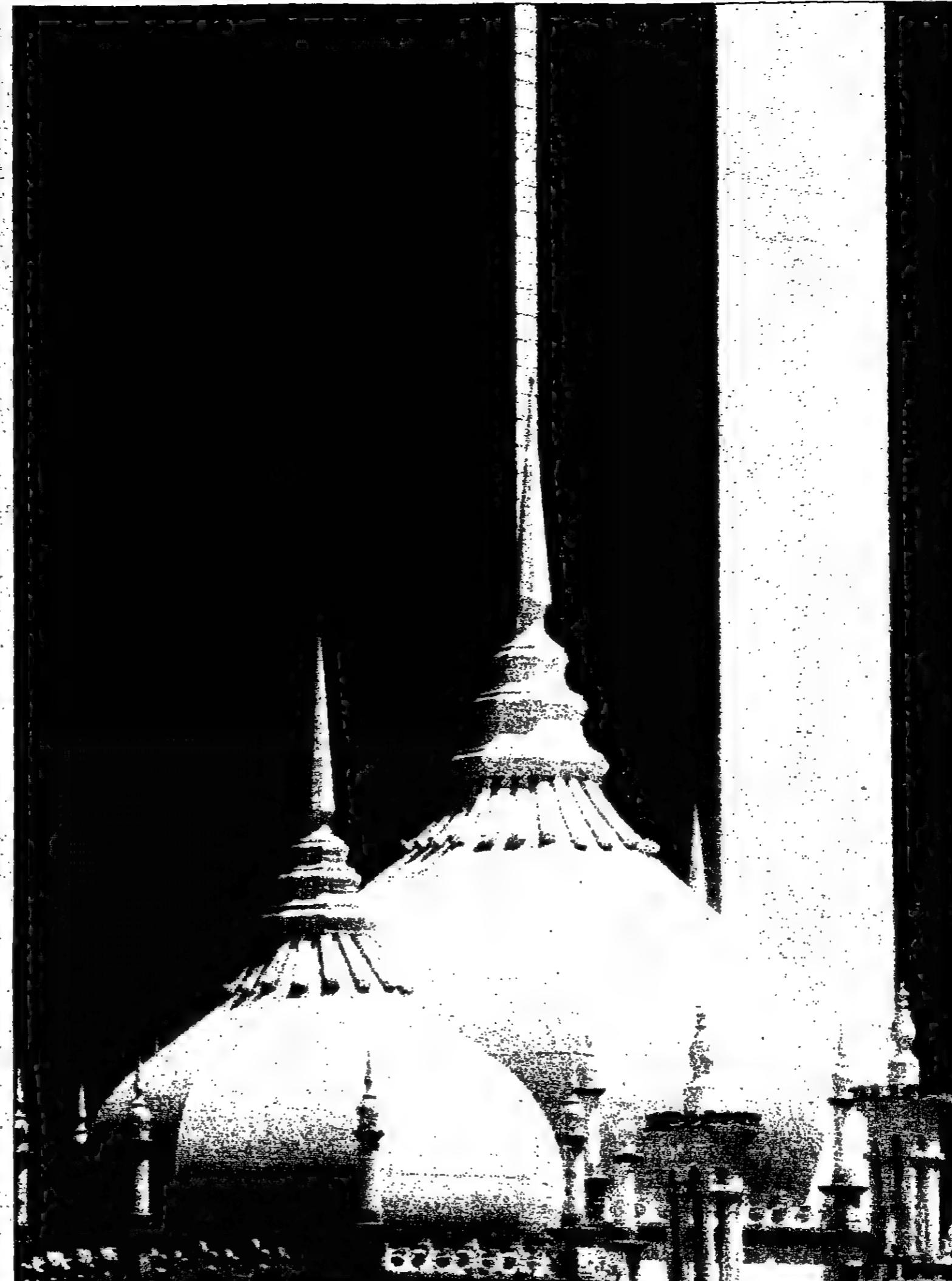
■ Reading: The Travel Bookshop (0171-229 5260) recommends *The Golden Chersonese*, by Isabella Bird (Oxford University Press, £11.99); *The Consul's File*, by Paul Theroux (Hamish Hamilton, £14.99); *Malaysia & Singapore Handbook* (Footprint, £12.99).

almost incredibly loud new statue to the "Laughing One". One morning, I visited a family house in a side street. It had a papaya tree in the garden. I rang the bell and the man of the house, a Chinese Catholic teacher, introduced me to his mother, Khoo Su Nin, who has devoted herself to chronicling the city's colonial architecture.

Such architecture comes in several forms, mainly the wildly overblown and mostly derelict mansions built by Chinese merchants before they discovered air conditioning and moved on, and the fine, terraced shop-houses — cool, dim, grandly panelled, these are houses in which the indoors and the outdoors are barely separated.

The mother and son I met had a servant girl, and I am almost sure that if I had been able to stay for supper, and it had rained, I would have been delivered exactly the dream I came in search of. Though they might not be prepared to play the parts I had assigned in my mind's eye, they had at least preserved the film set.

RICHARD NORTH



In Kuala Lumpur, once mighty mosques are now dwarfed by soaring office buildings, a reflection of Malaysia's progress from a colonial past

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Germany and Poland: From Ludwig II's romantic fantasies to looking for wolves in Bialowieski . . .

Excesses of a truly Teutonic order

Mentioning the war is fine in Bavaria. Local people do so routinely, as I discovered on a journey along the region's "Romantic Road". On my second day there, for example, the minibus pulled up outside the austere portals of Landsberg prison. The big attraction: Adolf Hitler did nine months here after his ill-fated putsch in 1923, famously penning *Mein Kampf*.

You cannot go inside (it is still a prison), but you can stand outside the gates, put right forefinger to upper lip, raise straightened left arm in the air and goose-step up and down. Or, as we did, you can rut-nut at the embarrassing insensitivity of a young man doing exactly that, while his laughing girlfriend took a photograph. Crass Brits on holiday? Not a bit of it; they were Torsten and Monika, a pair of medical students from Munich.

Our journey had started 40 kilometres up the road at the glorious, ancient city of Augsburg. We strolled along wide, leafy boulevards, wove through narrow back streets and along sornimental green canals, stumbled on squares with spouting fountains and gazed in awe at the soaring Gothic cathedral and imperious Renaissance Rathaus (town hall).

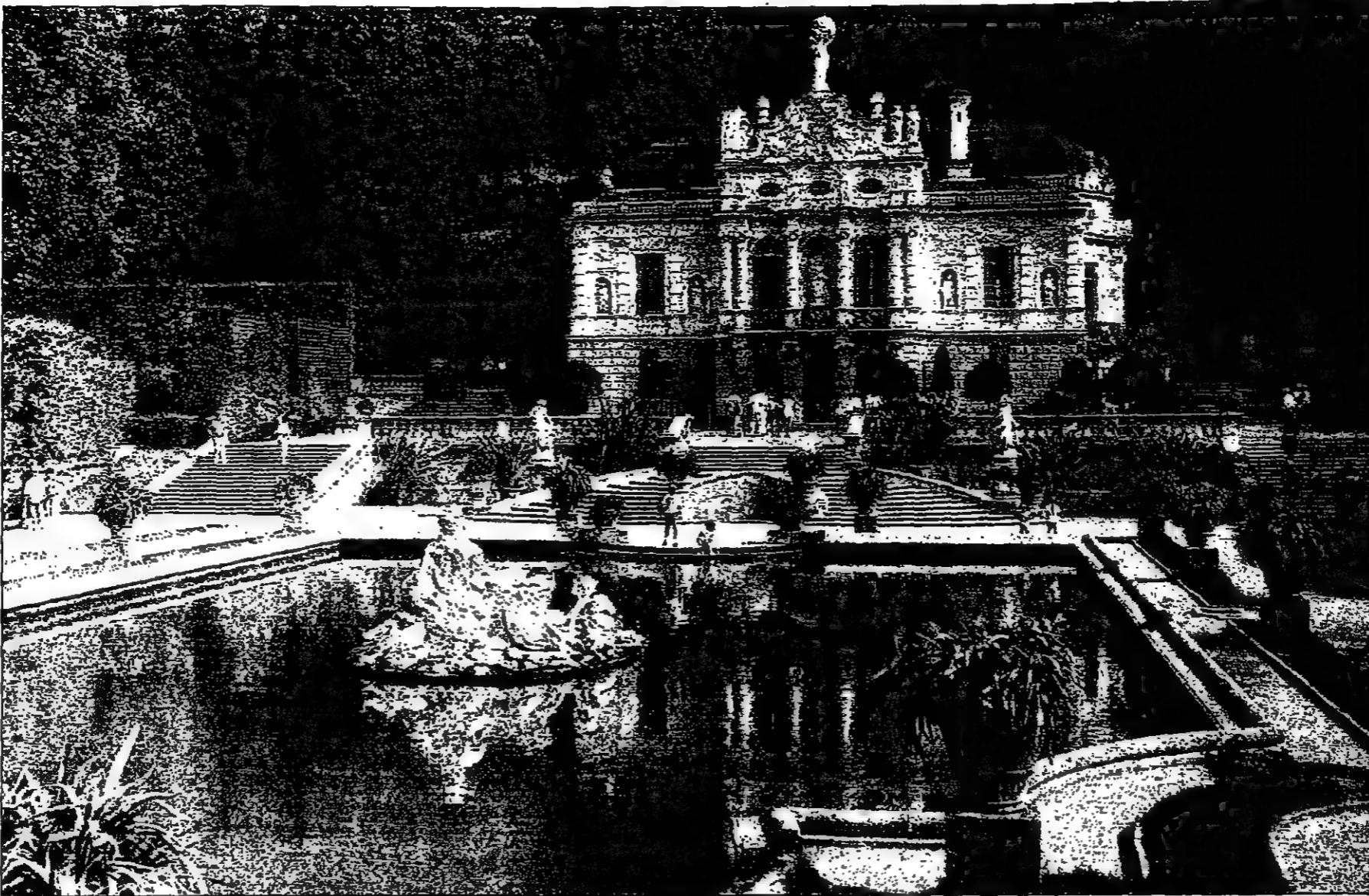
So immaculately restored are the old parts of Augsburg that it was hard to believe the city was virtually flattened in 1944 — "by British Airways", as Christina, our smiling Bavarian guide, assured us. Mozart's dad, the golfer Bernhard Langer and engineers Rudolf Diesel and Willy Messerschmitt all half from the town and take their places on its heritage trail, although citizens old seem a little coy about discussing the latter.

Travellers have trodden the "Romantic Road" as a sort of mini-Grand Tour since the 18th century. We are not talking about lovey-dovey romance but the romance of the past — castles, kings and chivalry, all enhanced by the majestic mountain scenery.

The foothills of the Alps began as soon as we left Landsberg. We crossed rolling hills of vineyards as clouds teased us with glimpses of rocky peaks pricking the horizon.

As we climbed into upper Bavaria the air became sharper and the roads more twisty. We wound through villages of wooden houses with steeply sloping roofs, huddled round blue and white maypoles. Every window was adorned with a box, ablaze with pink geraniums.

Then we dropped down to the valley of the turquoise River Lech, and dwarfing the genuinely 12th-century Hohenschwangau fortress in



Linderhof Castle was modelled along the lines of a French château by King Ludwig II of Bavaria; he was enjoying an infatuation with the Bourbons at the time.

above us, was a dazzling white castle floating on the clouds.

Anybody who has been to a Disney theme park will be familiar with Neuschwanstein. What I found utterly bizarre is that the Disney version is barely even a caricature of the castle it was modelled on. There it was, massive in scale, high on a craggy spur, its base hidden in swirling mist, and with Rapunzel-esque towers, spires and elongated turrets pointing skywards like intercontinental ballistic missiles.

Who needs 20th-century fantasies? Here was the most elaborate architectural parody ever built, a "medieval" wonder created according to the outlandish whims of King Ludwig II of Bavaria, and dwarfing the genuinely 12th-century Hohenschwangau fortress in

the valley below. Mad King Ludwig is a towering figure in Bavaria's history and psyche. He inherited the throne in 1864 at the age of 19 and set about populating his kingdom with the real-life fruits of his fairy-tale dreams.

He stood off on tall with long golden hair; he was gay; he had a demoniacal obsession with Richard Wagner, for whom he built palaces to perform in; he ran his court variously as a Chinese emperor or a medieval despot; he eschewed all the realities of state affairs; he emptied Bavaria's coffers and was eventually drowned in 1886 (almost certainly murdered) while swimming in a lake.

"So when did Ludwig visit Florida?" a woman with an unmistakable Texan accent asked loudly as we queued up with coachloads of

American and Japanese tourists, to be whisked through the castle from salon to throne room to bed chamber on what proved to be a disappointing tour. As with its Disney replica, Neuschwanstein's interior fails to live up to the edifice's glittering promise.

I preferred Linderhof Castle, modelled on a French château and built during a period of Ludwig's infatuation with the Bourbons. The fountains, formal garden, Baroque facade, riot of gilt stucco and chambers hung with tapestries are bewitching, although the vast grotto hewn out of a hillside and complete with stalactites, stalactites and a subterranean lake, is preposterous. The most incongruous thing, however, is this Renaissance palace's

location amid the deeply Teutonic villages of upper Bavaria.

An old Bavaria hand I was travelling with seemed able to plot our co-ordinates in the region according to the fare in the nearest bierkeller. For instance, he declared us well and truly south of the "sausage equator" (otherwise known as the Danube), once the thick, fatty *wurst* gave way to spicy, finger-like specimens. Deeper into the Alps, grey sausages are served floating in hot water and contain brains and offal.

What is almost impossible to avoid are huge portions of meaty food, generally served by larger-than-life lederhosen-clad waiters with beards and beer guts. They seemed to relish living up to their stereotype. The only alternative I could find to the unrelentingly

leaden diet was to order portions of wild mushrooms from the Black Forest — dainty *pfifferlingen* (chanterelles) and succulent *stein pilze* (ceps). The only trouble was that if I had eaten nothing more substantial than fungi, then I would certainly require a Helmut Kohl-sized slab of *Dampfnudeln* (steamed dumpling smothered in something sticky and sickly sweet) with a dollop of whipped cream. No wonder Bavarians need their health spas.

We finished our journey at Bad Tölz, a town full of people who were deadly earnest about every kind of therapeutic treatment from bathing in radiation-rich water to any of a dozen different kinds of massage. It clearly was not the sort of place you roll up at just for the fun of it. As Frau Schmidt explained when I

poked a curious nose into the baths: "I used to come here free, every year, for treatments which our health service paid for."

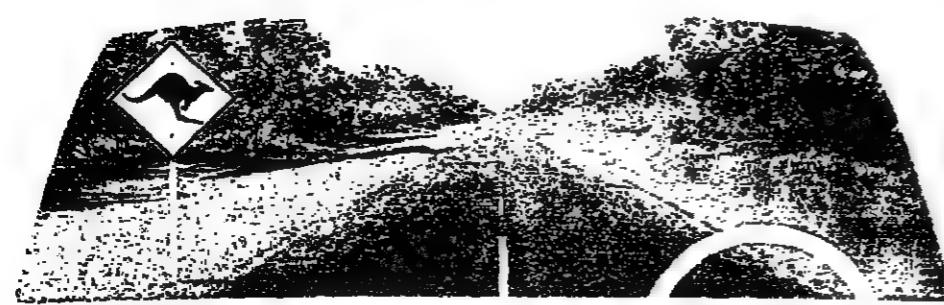
Alas, state-paid holidays at spas are fast becoming a thing of the past and the European monetary union is blamed. The cut is one of the many austerity measures designed to ready Germany for the venture, Frau Schmidt explained. "It is a terrible shame. But I can accept it because I am very, very European. What we have to do is embrace each other so close that we cannot hit each other. Not in this century or ever again."

I declined to take her literally just then, so I merely smiled, enjoying the Bavarian goodwill which was in the air.

MARTIN SYMINGTON

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Led a merry dance around the forest with wolves

Life was focused into the narrow beam of my head-torch. The melting snow was falling from the dense cover of trees like rain and the cold was eating through my inadequate gloves. Yet the excitement of death was in the air as we followed the wolf prints around the remnants of the red deer.

"Try and find the skull or a hip bone, then we can work out its age," said Kevin Bush, who was leading our band of volunteers. "Oh, and some blood would be good as well."

Twelve of us had travelled with the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers from the UK to this forest in eastern Poland. While all of our motives differed, there was a common magnet: the wolf. Bialowieski is home to the Mammal Research Institute, which has a long-term study under way on the forest's wolves. Two wolves are radio-collared, which enables researchers to monitor their travels and the packs they belong to without disturbing them. But it is labour-intensive work as 24-hour contact is needed for five days every month. This is where the volunteers step in.

Bialowieski is the last relic of primeval lowland forest that 10,000 years ago covered



European grey wolf at Poland's Bialowieski national park

Europe. Its continued existence owes much to the tyrannical urges of the powers that have surged back and forth across this part of Poland. In each case, while they have been laying waste to all the surroundings, a fragment of perverted humanity has emerged to save the heart of this forest.

Herman Goering was so impressed by the hunting here that he declared it sacrosanct.

Before him, Polish Kings and Russian tsars had also guaranteed its survival.

Now the great, ancient cathedral-like trees are protected in a national park, which is listed as a Biosphere Reserve as well as a World Heritage site. Despite all this, its future is still debated by logging firms.

Before letting us loose, Mr

Bush, a BCTV regional co-

ordinator, ensured we had

been trained to a standard enabling us to collect reliable data. The first, and most important lesson, was in the whereabouts of the border with Belarus. The border guards are not amused by vagrant researchers, and the last volunteers who went astray had to be rescued with a large number of bottles of vodka.

Eventually we did make contact. It was dark and bitterly cold as we tried to pick up the signal of a wolf named Bora. The previous shift had found her in the northeastern corner of the park. In the time it took us to get there, she had moved. It was a fraught four and a half hours before we eventually re-established contact.

She was the alpha female with the pack and they had moved a great distance. Relieved, I returned to the hotel.

The following morning we emerged to the grim faces of the last shift. The wolves we had spent so long trying to find had gone where we could not follow. Across the border

receiver. When we did find wolf tracks in the fresh snow it set my heart pounding.

We worked in a shift pattern. Four, six-hour shifts meant that when we were not radio-tracking we could be searching the forest tracks for footprints, droppings or a kill. One morning we arrived at breakfast to the excited faces of the night shift. A signal: at last we had the wolves in our grasp. Or not, as the case proved to be a slight error on the part of Joep, the organiser of the trip. A bison, with a similar radio-frequency, was to blame.

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Continued on next page

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Spain: All you need is a stout stick and a wine glass for a walk through the undulating vineyards of Rioja

ROBERT HARDY



Vineyards near Logroño where the landscape descends in broad terraces, valleys and streams from the foothills of the Sierra de Cantabria. The red wine of last year's harvest is fruity and has at least 12 or 13 degrees of alcohol.

A backpack and plenty of bottle

Picnic time in Rioja Mavessa, northern Spain. A morning of walking has earned me the pleasure of this agreeable spot but a glass for the *vino tinto* is lacking. No matter. Using a method I like to fancy I invented, I drink a bottle of mineral water, then slice the top three inches off the bottle, thus providing myself with an adequate, if less than elegant, beaker.

The red wine of last year's harvest is cool, fruity, has — I would guess — at least 12 or 13 degrees of alcohol and is the perfect accompaniment to the buttered crust of the delicious wholemeal loaf from La Tahona, artesana del pan, in Logroño and a Pyrenean cheese which resembles

Cantal. Lunch is later than intended. Counting upon the undulating dirt roads that provide easy marching in this country of vines, cereals and evergreen scrub, the calculation was that by noon, and before the shops closed for hours, I would have covered the ten miles between Oyon and the charming hilltop town of Laguardia, where I would have bought wine and, in under an hour, have been seated in the foothills of the Sierra de Cantabria.

Chance ruled otherwise. I had progressed only two or three miles from Oyon and was studying the small scale motoring map that was all I had been able to buy when another walker appeared over the hill. Like me, he had a stick

and a rucksack. Unlike me, he also sported a black Basque beret. He lived in Bilbao, but was visiting relations who had a house a few kilometres further on from where we were. Then perhaps he could tell me whether the right or left fork would be best for Laguardia? With pleasure, but it was the right direction for him, too. Perhaps we could walk together?

Two hours later, in the cellar of a modest little house in El Espino, I was eating olives and sampling the 1995 vintage made from some two dozen vines by one of the most simple methods — the juice run from an ancient hand press and fermented in an oak cask. Would I not stay to lunch, when we might taste

one or two other wines of the village, where there were seven wine-makers?

The kindness was touching, the sincerity not in doubt. Nevertheless, I explained, with little more than six or seven miles of walking behind me I had as many more to cover if I was to end the day with a clear conscience and a sense of achievement. Would I, then, at least accept a bottle to take with me? Knowing that it would now be late to buy anything in Laguardia I accepted without demur.

Lunch in El Espino would have been fun, but I had no regrets about this picnic on a hillside just south of Laguardia. Wine country or not, such moments are one of the walker's most valued delights. Even allowing for a certain

familiar euphoria induced by exercise, sun, and *vino tinto*, Rioja (by which I mean especially the Alavesa part of it) has more than fulfilled my hopes for a wine country that I am seeing for the first time. Descending in folds and broad terraces and valleys and streams from the Sierra de Cantabria, behind me, to the north bank of the Ebro, the land is not so devoted to the vine, nor are the vineyards so wide and so neatly ordered, as to suggest a viticultural park.

Nor is it cluttered by invasive urbanisation. Villages are few and for the most part appealingly situated, and although well endowed with architectural testaments to a past reaching to Roman times, or earlier, are rank upon rank of casks representing more oak than one might have believed could still exist in all the hardwood forests of the old and New Worlds put together, but high tech is well understood and widely practised, and the tendency to over-oak the reds seems far from persisting as a general rule.

Tonight at dinner I shall have no difficulty in procuring local wine of pleasing distinction that has spent no more than a few months in the wood. Not that I shall be in a pretentious frame of mind: it will have been altogether too good a day for that.

In cobbled squares markets

have been held long ago. In labyrinthine streets and secret courtyards the summer sun reaches only briefly even at high noon. Thus the feel of the land is still essentially rustic. One would not be surprised to learn that in many cellars grapes are still pressed with the bare feet and vinified in open troughs hewn from the native stone.

So far as commercial wine-making in Rioja is concerned, it is a seriously misleading impression. Picturesquely to be seen in the bodegas of Haro and Logroño are rank upon rank of casks representing more oak than one might have believed could still exist in all the hardwood forests of the old and New Worlds put together, but high tech is well understood and widely practised, and the tendency to over-oak the reds seems far from persisting as a general rule.

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NIGEL BUXTON

RIOJA FACT FILE

- British Airways (0845 222111) flies from Heathrow to Bilbao twice daily, from £119 return.
- P&O Ferries (0990 360360) has a 35-hour crossing from Portsmouth to Bilbao, sailing twice a week. Ten-day return fares start at £265 for a car and two adults. Cabin £50 each way, extra.
- Brittany Ferries (0990 360360) sails twice weekly from Plymouth to Santander (24-hour crossing) with low season return fares from £291 for a car, two adults and cabin.
- The Hotel Los Agustinos in Haro (03 34 941 31 1309) charges £125 per night for a double. Rooms can be pre-booked through Britney Ferries from £34 per person per night. The tourist office opposite the hotel is knowledgeable and helpful.
- Maps: £10,000 Spanish Military Survey, sheets Haro & Logroño. Order from Stanford, Long Acre, London WC2 (071-836 1521), £5.95 (£7.25 by post).
- The Travel Bookshop (0171-229 5260) recommends *The Face of Spain*, by Gerald Brenan (Penguin, £6.99), *The Foods and Wines of Spain*, by Penelope Casas (Penguin, £16), *The New Spaniards*, by John Hooper (Penguin, £8.99).

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Day 6: Breakfast at hotel. Today we visit the Isandlwana and Talana battlefields.

Breakfast at hotel then continue to Durban. Included is a city tour of Durban and the craft markets.

Day 7: Breakfast at hotel. Morning at leisure. Then transfer out to airport for flight back to London via Johannesburg.

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WORD WATCH

Answers from page 25

NICOLO

(c) A type of onyx. The aphetic form of *onix*, a diminutive from the Latin *onix*. "The variety of onyx known as nico, consisting of a layer of a bluish tint over black."

PIEPOWDER

(c) Wayfaring, itinerant, from the Anglo-French and Anglo-Latin *pēde-pulvērosū* dusty-footed. Hence a travelling man, a wayfarer, especially an itinerant merchant or trader. Chiefly used in the *Court of Piepowders*, a summary court formerly held from the 14th century at fairs and markets to administer justice among itinerant dealers and others temporarily present. "Dost think that John Bull will be tried by Piepowders?"

POMADA

(a) An exercise of vaulting upon or over a horse by placing one hand on the pommel of the saddle. From the Italian for the pommel of a saddle, *pomo*. Aubrey, *Brief Lives*, 1697: "He was very active. He did the pomada in the saddle of the third horse in his armour."

NESCIENCE

(a) Absence or lack of knowledge, ignorance. Or an instance of this. From *nescientia* a late Latin noun from *nescire* to be ignorant. "The miserable fraction of Science which united Mankind, in a wide universe of Nescience, has acquired."

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Day 3: Breakfast at hotel then tour to Kruger National Park.

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Day 4: Breakfast at hotel then full day game viewing.

Breakfast at hotel then travel through Swaziland to Zululand overnight at Hluluwa Hilltops (or similar) for overnight.

Day 5: Breakfast at hotel then continue tour to Dundee via Vryheid along the battlefield route. Accommodation for two nights at The Royal Inn.

Day 6: Breakfast at hotel. Today we visit the Isandlwana and Talana battlefields.

Breakfast at hotel then continue to Durban. Included is a city tour of Durban and the craft markets.

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AROUND THE WORLD: A WEEKEND GUIDE

Hear Verdi on the Nile

A SPECIAL production of *Aida* in Luxor in October marks the 125th anniversary of the opera's world premiere. First performed in Cairo in 1871, the opera was composed by Verdi to celebrate the opening of the Suez Canal. Set in Memphis and Thebes, now the Nile's most popular holiday resort of Luxor, it is to be performed against the 3,500-year-old backdrop of Queen Hatshepsut's Temple, the title role shared by April Miller and Willmotcha Serrandres.

Cox & Kings (0171-673 5000) has a four-night break for £1,195, flying to and from Cairo. B&B accommodation, a category A ticket to the opera and excursions in Cairo and Luxor. Prospect Music and Art Tours (081-995 2151) offers a choice of return flights to Luxor with a week's B&B hotel accommodation for £895, or flights and a night in Cairo followed by five nights in Luxor, returning from Aswan, for £950. Excursions and opera tickets are included in both tours.

Cruising along with the cargo

IT WAS in response to cruise passengers' requests on "how can we go to sea on a real ship, without dressing up, entertainment and going ashore en masse?" that Ian G. Cameron, a former cruise captain, began to organise passages on working ships where passengers are welcome to join the voyage but the cargo comes first.

On a traditional Fijian banana boat, a round-trip carrying cargo from Portsmouth to Big Creek in Belize and Cozumel in Honduras, returning with a hold full of fruit 28 days later, costs £1,980 (a one-way trip is £1,000). The ships have three twin-bedded cabins with private facilities and passengers dine with the British officers.

Sailing from Felixstowe, a 23,000-tonne container ship with indoor swimming pool, sauna and library can carry eight passengers for two months on an Indian Ocean route via Mauritius, the Seychelles, Madagascar and back to the UK for about £3,400. These and other trips from Cargo Ship Voyages (01473 736265).

FOR the over-55s with a penchant for fast cars, Loch Torridon Hotel (01425 791242) in the southwest Scottish Highlands offers two-night breaks with accommodation, dinner and breakfast, plus a Ferrari, Aston Martin, Lotus, Porsche or Austin Healey to while away the evenings.

From Susan Dennis, Crawley Down, West Sussex

I have just returned from a family fortnight in Eilat and would recommend Israel to anyone as an ideal family destination. However, there was one big disappointment when I planned to visit Egypt. I was turned back at the border because the children were on my passport — but we were staying with my husband in Eilat. Even before leaving Britain, I was not made aware of any passport regulations, otherwise I could have made arrangements for the children. I feel sure I cannot be the only busy parent who would want to do interesting cultural trips without the family, who much preferred to have a day on the beach rather than a four-hour drive to some ruins. There was no mention in the tour operator's brochure of these restrictions for leaving Israel.

The Egyptian Consulate says: "There is some misunderstanding. There should be no problem for this lady to travel without her children. But the best way to ensure there is no



Queen Hatshepsut's Temple in Luxor is the backdrop to a production of *Aida* to mark the 125th anniversary of the opera's world premiere

drive. Those flying to Luxor, the nearest airport, will have the car meet them. The cost (excluding flights) is £850.

Back to nature

ENVIRONMENTAL charity the Field Studies Council (01743 830322), which runs nearly 40 overseas study courses for both all-round enthusiasts and serious naturalists, introduces "The Elusive Canary Islands" in January.

Better known, perhaps, as the habitat of the Greater Pot-Bellied Lizard, the hinterland of Tenerife can boast a remarkable range of scenery from subtropical palm groves to pristine lava fields and pine forests. Strange little Lazarote, blown up by volcanic activity is also on the itinerary of the ten-night fully inclusive tour which costs £1,300.

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The Egyptian Consulate says: "There is some misunderstanding. There should be no problem for this lady to travel without her children. But the best way to ensure there is no

problem is to obtain a visa in the UK, or in our consulates in Aqaba or Eilat, and insist it is for an individual."

From Mr M Warner, Woodbridge, Suffolk: Having recently returned from a magical holiday in New Zealand, I must write to express my disappointment in the article of April 5, which

failed to transmit the many superb facets of a holiday in a country more beautiful than I dared to believe. To base a page on six days in the country is unfair — New Zealand is the best holiday destination I have been to in many years of travelling. Do go, but keep it clean for my next visit.

From Audrey Binyon, Cobham, Surrey:

Joanna Mitchell (Weekend, April 19) complained of the £7 tip requested by her Nile guide. My husband and I went on a Nile trip and were much impressed that the guide did all the tipping so that we were not pestered. I noticed the passing of coins each time we went through a gate or door, so that we were not asked for anything. The guide would pounce on any of us who did try to give, as he had already done so.

• We welcome letters on holiday travel. Send them to: Letters, Travel Department, The Times, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN or fax 071-782 5124.

From Mr M Warner, Woodbridge, Suffolk:

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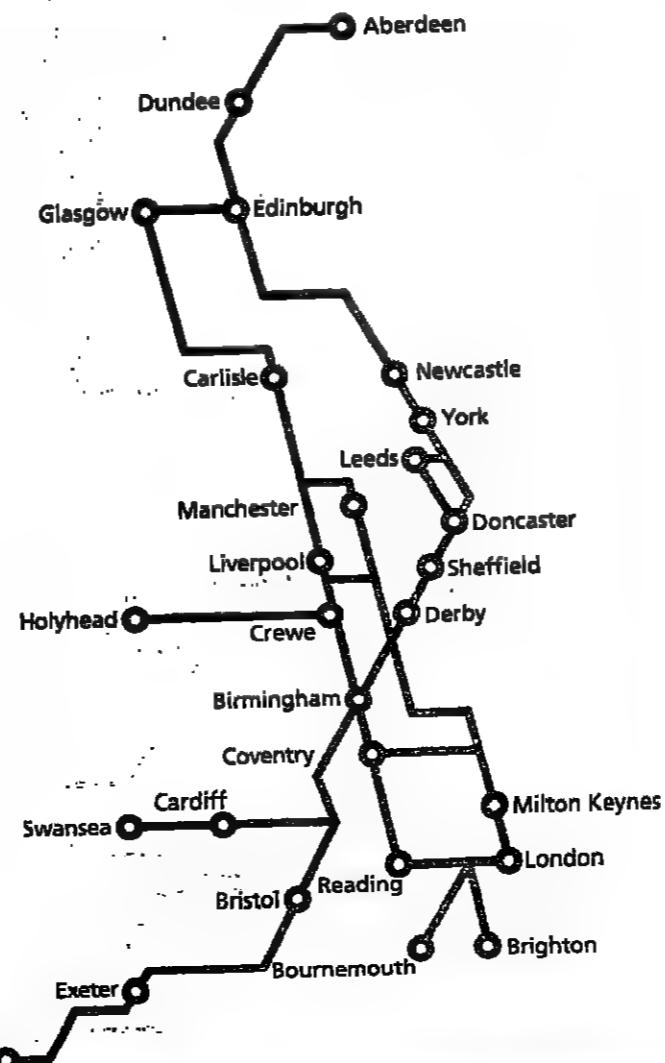
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That

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THE SUNDAY TIMES IS THE SUNDAY PAPERS

CHESS

by Raymond Keene

DESPITE an exciting victory in the first game of his match against the IBM Deep Blue computer, Kasparov crashed badly in round two against the silicon monster. He chose an unwise defence, as Black, which condemned him to constant passivity, and just as he was about to leap out and force a draw, Kasparov lost all faith in his position and sensationally resigned.

Some experts have speculated wildly, that the machine's play so closely resembled that of Karpov, his arch-rival, that Kasparov simply lost heart. Others of us prefer to believe that the stress of defending against inexorable pressure caused his seeming breakdown.

W: Deep Blue; B: Kasparov;

Ruy Lopez

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6
3 Bb5 a5 4 Bb4 Nf6
5 d4 Bb7

I question whether this is the right approach against Deep Blue. True, the closed defence to the Ruy Lopez, which Kasparov adopted here, leads to a blocked situation in which computers do not usually excel. However, the published theory on this line is so extensive, and Deep Blue has been so well programmed with information, that it can traverse the opening phase by rote, as it were, simply following grandmaster examples and maintaining a slight edge without endangering its prospects by a strategic blunder.

6 Nf3 Nf6 7 Bb3 d6
8 c3 0-0 9 h3 h5
10 d5 f5 11 Nf2 Bb8
12 Nh1 Bg7 13 Ng3

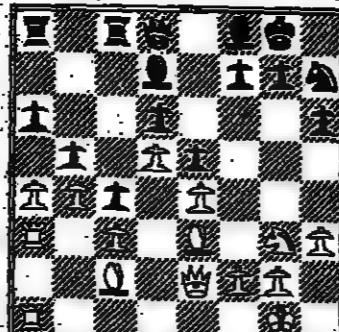
This is the kind of position where, left to its own devices, Deep Blue might have lashed out with the weakening advance g4, as in the first of these games. But with its memory banks packed with examples of grandmaster play, it can hardly go wrong. From now on, White dictates on both flanks.

13 ... Nf5 14 Bc2 e5
15 B3 Nc6 16 d5 Ne7
17 Be2 Ng5 18 Qd2 Nh7
19 a4

Penetration down the a-file will form a major theme.

19 ... Nf5 20 Nf4 Qd4
21 Qe2 Qd8 22 b4 Qc7
23 Rxc1 Qd8

24 Rxa4



26 f4. A well-timed advance. Either Black captures on f4, exposing his d5-pawn, or he allows White to take on e5, when White's d-pawn will become passed.

28 ... Nf6 27 fxe5 dx5
28 Qf1 Ne7 29 Qd2 Nc6
30 Bb6 Qe7 31 Rxe5 Be7
32 Be5 Bf8 33 Nf5

Further restricting Black's options.

33 ... Bdx5 34 exd 16
35 Bxd5 Bxd5 36 axd5 axb5
37 Be4

White is poised to smash into Black's position down the a-file. The text was widely praised at the time, blocking Black's final options as it does, but in the light of subsequent analysis, 37 Qb6 might have been better.

37 ... Rxe2 38 Qxa2 Qd7
39 Qe7 Rf7 40 Qb6 Rb7
41 Ra8+ Kf7 42 Qd6 Qc7
43 Qe8+ Kg6+ 44 Kf1 Rb4
45 Rxa5

Black resigns. Depressed by the anaconda tactics of the machine, Kasparov now chose to capitulate.

Amazingly, he missed a certain draw with 45...Qe3 46 Qxd5 Rb7 (the saving move) 47 Bf3 Qcl+ 48 Kf2 Qd2+, however White plays,

Black will ultimately gain a draw by perpetual check with his queen.

WINNING MOVE

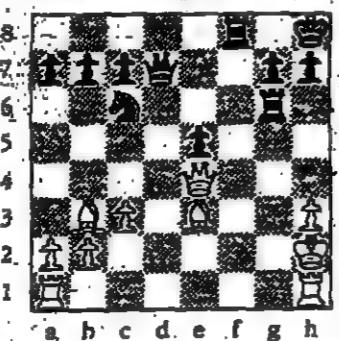
By Raymond Keene
Black to play. This position is from the game Steinbaur - Es-
tein, Moscow 1949.

The black major pieces are poised menacingly on the open files, leading into the white position. How did he now make the most of this?

Send your answer on a postcard to *The Times*, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN. The first correct answer drawn on Thursday will win a year's subscription to the *Stamford Society*, which includes a free invitation to the annual dinner at Stamford's in the Strand. The answer will be published next Saturday.

Last week's solution: 1 Qb6+

Last week's winner: Mr Davies,
Winchester, Hampshire.



a b c d e f g h

No 1090

ACROSS

- 1 Spotty outbreak (4)
- 3 Carib. island, cap. Bridge-town (8)
- 5 Glide over surface; read rapidly (4)
- 9 Chicken/wine stew (3,2,3)
- 11 Pygmyan musical (2,4,4)
- 14 Unusual item (6)
- 15 Bravery (6)
- 17 Personal effects (10)
- 20 Pre-dinner drink (8)
- 21 The Sign of the - (C-Doyle); sounds like took out (4)
- 22 Difficulties (8)
- 23 Accurate (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1089

- ACROSS: 4 Cupid 7 Pandrama 8 Helm 9 Nautilus 10 Brassy 12 Scrawl 15 Reckon 16 Faifst 19 Rife 20 Coatese 21 Siege
- DOWN: 1 Appear 2 Animus 3 Orkney 4 Canfield 5 Pull rank 6 Damself 11 Absolute 12 Solstice 14 Infers 15 Ruffle 16 Cerise 17 Offkey

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THERE are 31 clues, one for each consonant and two for each vowel. Solutions either begin or end with the appropriate letter. Fit in the words where they will go. Splits appear at hyphens and where two separate words are formed.

- A Author's proof contains acknowledgement for Thatcher's material.
- A It's commonly very cold about the little tree in the crescent.
- B The Bard's load is completely wrapped in matting.
- C About to mislay a record containing a feature of a type of molecule.
- D Senior member is to find an answer to passionate desire.
- E The vitality or second sight required to score north of the border.
- E One's about to strip Greek goddess and cause vexation.
- F The way a student follows illness found in rivers.
- G The girl's come back well — that's brilliant.
- H New Zealand winger grabs last of millet for Caribbean rodent.
- I Logical fallacies providing one with the return of lands held in absolute ownership.
- J Guardian relinquishing pence exchanged for other currency.
- K Judge dog creating forceful vibration.
- M Herb for remembrance (3)
- M Troy gathers up more Scottish litter.
- N Large stupid person given counterfeit coin? That's very cruel!
- O Make the most of expenditure after old pit failed.
- O Island king has sign about erected architectural feature.
- P Supports insolence of the man in the field.
- Q One of a litter gets another a source of antipyretic drug.
- R Without a motive, returned a severe rebuff.
- S A flag's colour when there's mud on it.
- T A tribesman living in Africa is polled about Israel.
- U A birthmark endlessly reflected in parts of the eye.
- U Lack of prudence, initially, in adolescence leads to fruitfulness.
- V British queen's spy network turned over seaweed.
- W The person that hides ploughs at some place or other.
- X A water-spirit is about to bring up an ornament for concealment.
- Y Lame American maiden substituted by liberal boisterous lassie.
- Z Middle-Eastern soldier making a style of dance music remain in vest beforehand.

Solution to No 3406: Morrissey by 149

Eight-letter words: 1 basilisk; 1 in bi + anag./bear-cats; ear c in hats/irritate; rit in trate; 2 aerodyne; anag./en all age./psoriasis; pilosity; 3 anag. + c. 3 analcite; an + anag./pratice; P rattler./relieves; anag. 4 isognath; sog in long l/molasses; alone) in mate/prentice; E in anag. 5 European; 2 mings and anag./portolan; portolan./satyrress; a Tyr in firphy anag. 6 footware; two of ea. anag. + 1. 7 bedsheet; anag./Gratiano; comp. anag./finscope; cop in 1 + rise. S listener; Sten in lie.; nuisance; 2 mings/Polianian; Po labia N. 9 doddered; odder in def(a)d./optional; anag./takeable; tea in table.

Three-letter words: 7-8-9, -1-4-7, -2-5-8, are defined in correct order.

The winner is: Ray Stewart of Compton Martin, Bristol. The five runners up are: B. Nutall of Crawley, West Sussex; R. Boot of Ealing; M. Wilson of Cardiff; Roger Phillips of London; Philip Gooden of Bath.

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PUNCHLINE



READERS are invited to write an amusing caption for the cartoon (right), from *The Strand Magazine* (reproduced from Westminster Libraries, Sherlock Holmes Collection, Marylebone Library).

The cartoon will be printed again next week with a caption from those submitted.

Send caption suggestions on a postcard with your name and address to: *Strand Caption 51*, *Weekend, The Times*, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN.

The Editor's decision is final. The closing date for entries is Wednesday, May 14.

BRIDGE

by Robert Sheehan

AFTER A PLAY-OFF between the leading performers in the 1996/7 Premier League, the selectors have chosen Gus Calderwood and Dick Shek, Justin and Jason Hackett, and Gerald and Stuart Tredinnick to represent Great Britain in the 1997 European Championships. With Armstrong and Kirby, and Forrester and Robson unavailable, this looks about the best British team. It's the first time two sets of twins have represented Britain. The non-playing captain is Tony Friday, with David Burn coach.

This is a hand from the play-off:

Dealer East East-West game IMP%

+K076 +A1084

+A +J107

+B3 +10976

+W +K52

+S +B4

+10 +DQJ

+A6

+94 +975

+K53 +B52

+B4

It seemed likely that West had four spades and East two — if West had three, he would have known that East was not ruffing, and might well have switched to a diamond. (Remember, West knew nothing of South's hand.) That meant declarer's only chance was to find East with at least two more clubs, so he played ace and another club. A fourth round of clubs left East helpless — if he ruffs, his declarer can overruff, cash his last trump and re-enter dummy with the ace of diamonds to draw East's last trump. If East discards a diamond, South discards a spade and leads a spade winner from dummy — if East ruffs it leads to the same position and if East continues to discard declarer eventually ends up with a high crossruff.

Had West exited with a diamond after winning the king of clubs, a vital entry to dummy would have been removed for the ending I describe above.

Declarer played the king of

hearts and a low heart to the ten. West discarding diamonds. Now came the queen of clubs, run round to West, who won and returned the two of spades. Declarer won in hand, leaving this (South to play):

+K0
+A8
+A
+J107
+B3
+10976
+W +K52
+S +B4

+94 +975

+A6

+B52

+A45

+K53

+B4

+B52

+A6

+B4

+94 +975

+A6

+B4

+A6

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THE TIMES

SATURDAY
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Page 3



The Hog trough that is a shrine to iron beasts

Page 10

SATURDAY MAY 10 1997

Alan Copps finds the style, performance and range of gadgetry offered by Mercedes-Benz's new coupé positively electric



Not so much souped-up saloon as grand tourer for four, offering all those Mercedes attributes of smoothness, comfort, solidity and safety combined with impressive, but carefully calculated performance

CLK, a cut-off above the rest

What is a coupé? The French word means 'cut off', and to most drivers suggests a saloon shortened and lowered to provide performance at the expense of space. Many are like that. But Mercedes-Benz's new CLK is the opposite, both literally and in character: it's very much a grown-up car rather than a cut-down one.

Underneath is a much-modified C-class chassis, the same in width and wheelbase but lengthened to accommodate the sweeping lines of this car and its astonishing load of electronic gadgetry. So it falls neatly between the C-Class and the E-Class coupé which it replaces. The result is not so much souped-up saloon as grand tourer for four, offering all those famous Mercedes attributes of smoothness, comfort, solidity and safety combined with impressive, but carefully calculated performance.

This car is aimed squarely at the favorite floating voter of campaigners in the car market — the 'user chooser', who comes in two versions: the senior executive who can have any company car he/she wants within a given price range, and the entrepreneur, the small business owner or professional who may only employ a handful of staff but does a lot of driving and buys a car as a company asset, though it may also provide family transport.

Such drivers are expected to account for more than half the British sales of the CLK, which Mercedes predicts to run at up to 3,000 a year. It has already taken 1,300 orders, even though the car will not be available for another six weeks or so. It will take five months for the company to clear that backlog of orders, says Walter Graves, passenger cars director for Britain: 'The car will appeal to a much wider audience than its predecessor, thanks partly to a lower entry point which means a

MERCEDES CLK	
Engine:	Four-cylinder, 136bhp 2-litre; supercharged four-cylinder 193bhp 2.3-litre; or 3.2-litre 218bhp V6
Transmission:	Five-speed manual or automatic (auto only on V6)
Performance:	CLK 200 0-62mph in 11 secs, top speed 130mph; 230 Kompressor V6 0-62mph in 8.4 secs/146mph; V6 0-62mph in 7.4 secs/150mph
Equipment:	ABS, ASR, BAS, ASSYST, twin airbags, eight-speaker radio cassette
Prices:	CLK 200 £26,400; CLK Kompressor £30,840; CLK 320 V6 £35,640



High technology dominates the cabin, while under the bonnet is the 2-litre engine from the C-class, the powerful V6 or the supercharged four-cylinder engine from the SLK.

CLK can be delivered fully equipped for £26,400."

The CLK is being produced in the same plant at Bremen where the company makes the fabulously successful SLK roadster. There is a two-year waiting list for that car and Mercedes has taken on 500 extra staff to try to meet demand. Nevertheless, nearly-new examples of the SLK are changing hands at up to £10,000 above the list price. Mercedes is confident the waiting time for the CLK will not be so long and the production line is geared up to produce 43,000 cars a year.

What you get for £26,400 is a car with the 2-litre engine from the C-class. It's an aggressive bit of

pricing that poses a strong challenge to BMW, whose 3-series currently dominates the smart coupé market, and to the newly-launched Volvo C70, which will be available in Britain this year only in its most upmarket form, costing £10,000 more. That's about the same as the top-of-the-range CLK, which comes with Mercedes' newly-developed, smooth and powerful V6 engine. It also comes with the supercharged four-cylinder engine from the SLK.

In all three versions, the CLK is an excellent car to drive. Despite the intimidating list of electronic equipment which promises to govern just about every function per-

formed by the human behind the wheel, thanks to the traditional rear wheel drive layout it can still provide the enthusiastic motorist with driving pleasure as well as smooth transport.

You are made aware of these electronics even before you get in. For the ignition key has been replaced by DAS, the driver authorisation system, a plastic peg that conceals a microchip to communicate with door locks, ignition, alarm and immobiliser.

Press the button once and the driver's door opens, press twice and both doors open, hold the button

down and the doors, windows and sunroof all open. Plug your DAS into the dashboard and, depending on the model, the warning lights will indicate the familiar ABS for anti-lock brakes, ASR for acceleration skid control, BAS for brake assist system (which detects emergencies and boosts stopping power) and ASSYST, the active service system which constantly monitors the state of the engine. This last takes into account the mileage and the way in which the car is used and can extend the service intervals up to 18,000 miles in the hands of a careful driver.

There are two trim levels, which cost the same, in each engine size.

The Elegance has softer suspension, exit lights, illuminated vanity mirrors and walnut facings, while the Sport offers a firmer ride and has an interior similar to the SLK with ivory-faced instruments and carbon-fibre style trim; it doesn't look quite so compelling in this air-conditioned grand tourer as it does in the little roadster.

But there is one thing in which the Sport version excels. Like any fashionable car these days, it has a cup-holder, the most sophisticated I have encountered. It springs from a panel on the central console and unfolds before your eyes. Next time I drive a CLK I'm going to take a Thermos of tea just so I can use it.

Peugeot 406 road test, page 3



Aiming to make a coup

The fight for the coupé market is heating up among the prestige carmakers just as two of the world's biggest manufacturers are ending production of their large coupés sold in Britain.

The Ford Probe, which has failed to make anything like the impact of its predecessor, the Capri, and Vauxhall's ageing Calibra will both disappear later this year. Both makers however will be launching smaller coupés.

CLK takes on the BMW 3-series, which has a 34 per cent share of the UK market for coupés. But its challenge comes at the same time as that from the impressive Volvo C70, which is a similar car in many respects but offers slightly more legroom in the back. Peugeot has also entered the race with its keenly-priced 406 Coupe based on one of the most highly rated saloons on the road.

At this week's launch, Jürgen Hubert, Mercedes' director for passenger cars, was confident the CLK will sell well, especially since it is priced at £7,000 less than the model it replaces: 'We want to remain a premium manufacturer, not take on the volume makers. But we have to be able to identify new trends in good time.'

Mercedes hopes that with the coupé it can repeat its success with the SLK roadster, a car which it thought would sell 100,000 worldwide but for which it is now confident of taking 200,000 orders.

But every manufacturer now sees the coupé as the sort of flagship it needs to draw attention to the rest of the range. Which is



Volvo C70: extra legroom



Peugeot 406: keenly priced

why Ford, though abandoning the Probe, will have the likeable and cutely-designed Puma, based on a Fiesta chassis, available by the autumn. Like the tiny Ka micro-car, Ford believes the Puma will look different enough to raise the profile of the rest of its products.

There is also the demographic reason for introducing a coupé into every range: there are simply more people around who do not need four or five doors. The growth of Dinkies (Double Income No Kids) and empty-nesters (couples whose children have left home) means there is spare money looking for a car. Which is why Mercedes is convinced it has a winner. Evidence is growing that buyers are looking beyond conventional choices into cars — such as people-carriers, convertibles and now coupés — which were barely a feature of the marketplace five or ten years ago.

Peugeot 406 road test, page 3

There is a perfectly good argument for increasing the duty on petrol... by comparison with drivers across the Channel, we are getting off lightly

Which road will the Chancellor take?

DRIVEN TO DISTRACTION



Peter Barnard

Gordon Brown's budget in a few weeks' time is primarily designed to raise the windfall tax from the privatised utilities, but there will be a lot more to the Chancellor's speech than that. Motorists in particular had better prepare for another soaking.

There are increasing signs that Mr Brown will take this opportunity to raise the duty on fuel. Already, 67.9 per cent of the cost of a litre goes to the Treasury, but that has been the case for so long that drivers have become inured to the perils of taxation: it is one of life's inevitable evils.

Indeed, there is a perfectly good argument for increasing the duty on petrol, and although this column is not famous for being prepared to empty its pockets in the cause of Whitehall revenue-

average of 59p (I have rounded the figures because currency fluctuations make fractions meaningless). Italy, Holland, France and Sweden are the most expensive markets at 70p, 69p, 68p and 66p respectively — and the average of those four, at 68.75p, is nearly 10p a litre above the British price. Obviously there are complex equations to do with average national incomes which affect all prices, but in general intense competition in the UK retail market has driven down petrol prices in real terms.

However there are several implications that arise from Mr Brown's likely raising of petrol duty. His move this week to free monetary policy from the vagaries of political influence, which I regard as the best and boldest decision by a Chancellor in 50 years, can nonetheless be seen as



having direct effects on motorists over the long term.

The establishment of an independent central bank in each EU country is a requirement of the Maastricht treaty (you know, the one the Tories signed). It is inevitable that, with an independent bank in each country, monetary policy — and therefore policy

on duties — will become much more uniform across Europe, with or without a single currency.

When that happens, there is certain to be pressure for equalisation of fuel prices. The only question left is whether they will come down to nearer the British level or go up to nearer the Italian one. One guess.

many not the few" because high mileage drivers would pay most and they are, overwhelmingly, either fairly well off or driving company cars. Anecdotal evidence suggests that pensioners and poorer people tend to drive less than others, for reasons not connected with the price of fuel.

Additionally, there is a point at which fuel prices become high enough to discourage the use of cars and encourage the use of public transport. The trouble is, nobody knows where that level is.

There is, of course, a downside to higher petrol prices. The big companies can afford to cut their margins, but every time the price of fuel goes up, a few hundred more small garages face closure. I am vastly attracted to the notion of a petrol station in every village, but the brutal truth is that most people will drive straight past one to fill up at a gulf forecourt.

We may have to face the fact that realistic prices which raise more duty to fund public services will mean the end of the small garage, most of which have in any event ceased to rely on petrol sales as their main source of income. Every gain entails a loss and we shall have to be hard-headed in measuring the one against the other.

Your dream car can come true

Powerful and utterly gorgeous, they are the cars of dreams well beyond the pockets of even the most enthusiastic motorists condemned to a life of humble hatchbacks. At least, they were.

For prices of even the most remarkable cars have refused to budge back after the recession, which means auctions are offering romantic marques for the price of family saloons.

Among the cars being offered by Coss of Kensington on Thursday are Ferraris and Jaguars that will stir the soul, yet still not make a dent in the size of a meteor crater in your wallet.

A 1980 Ferrari 400i is coming up at between £12,000 and £16,000. Admittedly not Maranello's finest, the 400i is still a thoroughbred among pit ponies on today's roads.

Under the bonnet is a 4.8-litre V12 worth 340 brake horsepower; in the cabin is magnolia leather and a whiff of history barely matched by other cars at this price.

Or there is a 1973 XJ12C: 7-litre V12 packing 500bhp, uprated brakes, lower suspension and big alloy wheels — all for between £7,000 and £12,000.

Ton fast and furious? Then there has not been a more elegant model than Jaguar's MkII series. Coss has a 1968 Daimler 250 version with a 2.5-litre V8 under the bonnet. It is English sporting elegance at its best — with a price tag of just £7,000 to £10,000.

Ordinary motorists do not have to be terrified of the auction circuit or gloomy that they could never scrape together enough money to own a classic, for classics come in many shapes and sizes and — as the Coss' sale at Chiswick House in London shows — often affordable prices.

At one end of the scale, a 1956 Maserati 250F racer last sold for £86,500. At the other, enjoyable novelties such as a 1943 Sherman tank was snapped up for a mere £12,000.

To the outsider, the world of classic car auctions may have something of the mystique of

Auction houses are offering classic marques at the price of family saloons, say David Selby and Kevin Eason

the fine art sale room, but if you think of them not so much as art — not even as used cars, but in most cases as very used cars — the intimidating veneer peels back to reveal a world of exciting possibilities.

At the supermarket level of the authentic but relatively common cars, the shelves are stacked high with enticing and affordable fare. There are sales galore at this time of year — but which are the most popular cars with British buyers?

Over the last year, 410 Jaguars were offered at auction, with MG coming in at number two with 395 offered. But the most prolific single model was the MGB with 211 at auction, prices ranging from a mere £945 for a shell of an MGB GT to a stellar £31,500 for an ex-works MGB GT racer. Highest auction price for an MGB roadster was £14,700 for a superb trophy winner. But if you're after an MGB roadster there's a world of choice for £3,500-£8,500.

The E-type Jaguar was the second most popular single model, with 142 auctioned: that's a testimony to the high-survival rate of E-types, their enduring appeal and collectability. As for E-type prices, they ranged from £3,000 for a rough 1968 2+2 fixed-head coupe to £41,500 for a 1973 roadster with 330 miles on the clock, a car which might have commanded £100,000 in the boom of the Eighties. If you're after a decent E-type roadster, £15,000-£35,000 is the kind of budget you'll need at auction.

In fact, virtually all Jaguars are collectible, though there are neglected models, particularly the MkII, which is associated with the Sixties and most recently with television's Inspector Morse. Top recent auction price for a MkII is £26,000, but the majority fall in the £5,000-£15,000 range. Less obvious is the S-type saloon, in effect a MkII with a stretched boot and actually a better handler. Top auction price over the last year is mere £5,100.

Another likely Jaguar for the first-time collector is the 420, an S-type with a MkII quad-headlamp nose, which can be even cheaper than an S-Type. Probably the least loved Jag of all though is the gargantuan MkX/420G, a bloated bollard scraper with a girth of oft 4in and nearly 17ft long. Anti-social perhaps, but a barrel of laughs at knockdown money.

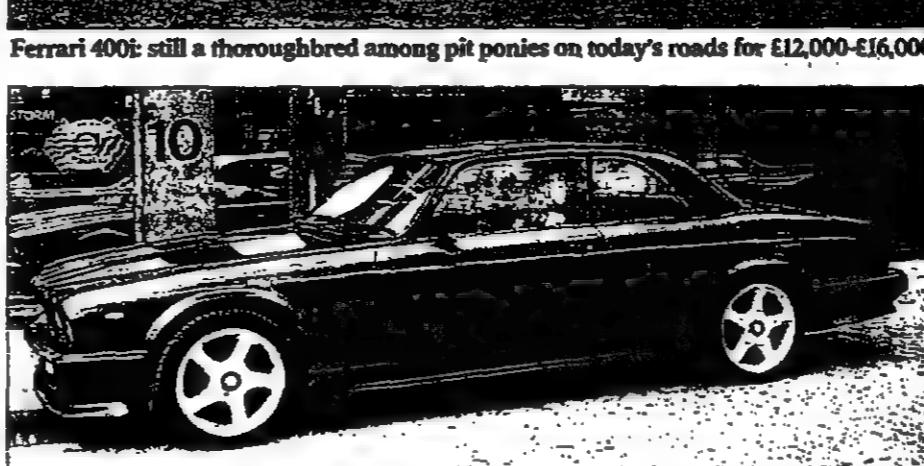
Triumph is third most popular classic marque. The TR models were a mainstay of affordable true-Brit sportscar motoring from 1953 to 1976.

With the recent vogue for the styles of the Seventies, even the ghastly TR7 is beginning to acquire a classic afterglow. The Stag is the most prolific Triumph at auction, with ballpark prices ranging from £3,000 to £12,000, and any TR model will cost similar money.

Just behind Triumph is Mercedes headed by the SL sports models from the 190SL of the Fifties and early Sixties (£10,000-£23,000) to the 450SL of the Seventies and Eighties (£5,000-£13,000), but a 300SL is rare — and very expensive.

In at number five is Rolls-Royce, the mainstay models being Silver Clouds and Shadows and their Bentley counterparts, the S-series and T-Series. The top 10 on the classic hit parade is completed by Ford, Bentley, Austin, Morris and Ferrari.

Even though the marques might be historic, that does not necessarily mean the price will be high — and this summer could provide opportunities for some of the best classic car shopping for years.



Jaguar XJ12C: 7-litre V12 packing 500bhp and big alloy wheels for £7,000-£12,000



Daimler 250 V8: English sporting elegance at its best with a price tag of £7,000-£10,000

Vaughan Freeman on how the supermarket chain is monitoring the efficiency of its delivery fleet by satellite

Satellites are tracking hundreds of supermarket drivers to check their speed, how much fuel they use and even how hard they rev their engines. Safeway has plugged its fleet of 550 trucks into a 24-hour monitoring system.

The potential for savings, not only on fuel but on maintenance and repairs, is enormous. The Safeway fleet covers 62 million miles between 410 stores, consuming around 33 million litres of diesel fuel annually, costing £10 million.

The company's Integrated Vehicle Monitoring System also provides back-up for the group's hundreds of drivers, who are constantly on the move and always looking for ways to avoid traffic jams and other hold-ups.

Safeway's checkout in the sky

The system monitors the position of each vehicle on the firm's fleet via transmitters (Mobile Data Terminals) which log an array of data and then send to communications pylons which relay the information through orbiting satellites.

The satellite feeds the data back to the Safeway base station, where it is relayed to wall-mounted maps at a dozen depots so that the position of each individual truck can be seen.

The system is so sensitive that it can identify individual drivers who, for instance, might be using too many revs in a particular gear and it is then

possible to isolate the fault and put it right in remaining cars so that the driver can drive in a more fuel-efficient way.

This is not just a Big Brother scheme to spot whenever a lorry driver is stopping off for an illicit cup of tea says Safeway, but also alerts drivers to potential and actual traffic delays, so that drivers waiting for deliveries can be told that the load is likely to be late. If delays are inevitable and possibly serious, other trucks can be despatched, using different routes, in order for the one stuck in traffic.

The potential savings are huge. Safeway expects to recoup the installation costs of around £1.5 million and annual operating costs of £350,000, in just over a year by cutting down on fuel consumption, reduced driver time, and transport costs incurred through delays.

The satellite tracking system has already reduced by 10 per cent the fuel costs at one of the group's biggest distribution depots, and it is hoped it will also play a major role in reducing delays which are estimated to cost the group around £1.5 million a year in driver wages.

Nicola Ellen, Safeway's public affairs manager, says: "Every lorry is satellite linked using an on-board computer and cab satellite link which communicates with a central base as well as to individual stores. There is also a sensor probe in the vehicle's fuel tank to monitor consumption."

"The system automatically, and continuously, supplies information about speed, fuel consumption, the temperature of the load on board, as well as the location of the vehicle. When the lorry is within 15 minutes of arriving at a store to make a delivery, the computer automatically notifies the store by triggering a pager to tell staff, so that they can be ready to unload the moment it arrives, which cuts turn-round times."

An automatic attraction

FROM historic brochures to radiators, the Beaulieu Autojumble has everything. This unique event at the National Motor Museum in Hampshire this weekend is the place to be whatever you want to buy for your classic car — or want to buy even if you don't have a classic car but a keen interest in the history of motoring. Just have a copy of CAR

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Present this voucher when you pay for admission. One ticket per car/voucher. Cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer or discount. Admissions: £10.00 adults, £5.00 children, £2.00 concessions, £1.00 children & concessions. Beaulieu Autojumble & Exhibition

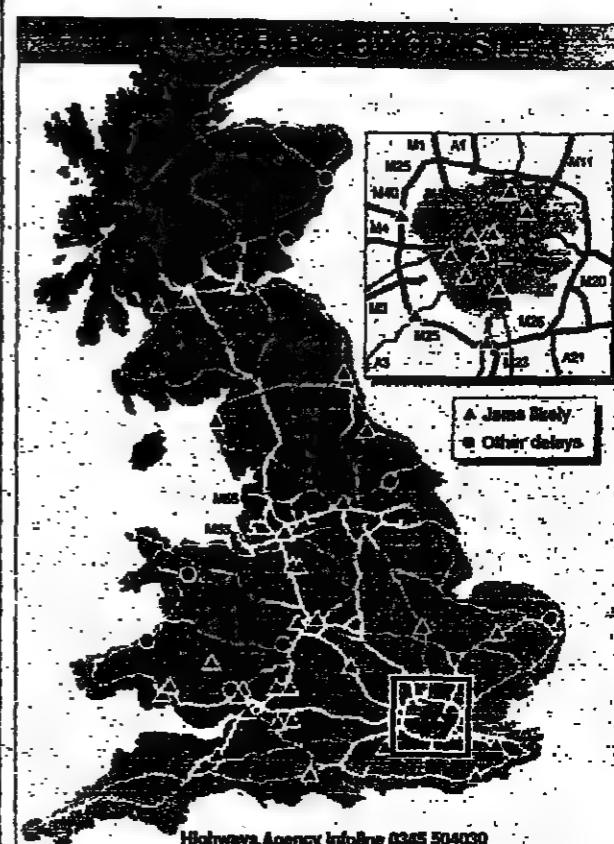
AUTOFAX by David Long and Lee Evans

In 1911 Isaac Smith successfully patented a car fueled by gravity, though he never managed to build one.

Three triplets, Kate, Timothy and Rachel Brannan, all passed their driving tests on the same day at the same Essex Test Centre.

APERIOD WINNING THE P1 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP JOHN SCHETTER HELPED HAVING TEAM POLICE AND MOD PERSONNEL

THE STATION SURVEY IN JAPAN HAS REVEALED THAT VARIOUS AREAS BEHIND THE WHEEL IN MORE THAN ONE THIRD OF TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS.



A James Riley
in Other delays

Worlds away from your average Escort

This car breathes fire. Ford's rallying dragon spits out sheets of flame from its huge oval exhaust and emits a devastating bark of engine noise like somebody firing shotguns at five feet.

As crowds gather to stare fascination turns to fright and alarm as the exhaust blasts away, causing dogs to flee, enthralled youngsters to dance with excitement and anyone sane to cover their ears.

This is Ford's world rally car, a 300bhp, 150mph machine with four-wheel drive, which double world champion Carlos Sainz is piloting in this year's world rally championship. And underneath it all, well hidden by the lurid, fluorescent orange paintwork, sponsors' badges, fins, power, speed, is... a modest Ford Escort, Britain's best-selling family car.

What Sainz is driving, at heart, is a Halewood hatchback, a car designed for going shopping, a handy town runabout. So, what would it be like to take his car out for a typical Sunday on the road? Forget all that sliding sideways through forests stuff. CAR 97 put the Sainz car through the toughest test in today's motoring environment - Sunday shopping.

So, first stop was Tesco. The problem going shopping in a car like the one in which Sainz drives is...

ANDREW HARRON

Carlos Sainz could become rally champion in this fiery Ford, but Vaughan Freeman found it useless on a shopping trip

work is that it only has two seats. It has no carpets, no ashtray, no cup-holders, not even a radio tune in to the local traffic delays. There is however, lots of bare, white-painted metal, a gigantic spare wheel that takes up what space is left in the back by the specially-strengthened fuel tank. The two bucket-shaped racing seats in the front are fastened with harnesses that strap, buckle and belt to hold every part of you firmly in place.

ESCAPE PLUS

Engine: Turbocharged 4-cylinder 16-valve 2-litre giving 300bhp with permanent four-wheel drive.
Performance: 0-60 in under five seconds, top speed 150mph or higher.
Economy: Undisclosed, but not likely to win votes from the green lobby.
Equipment: Massive rollcage, big net in back.
Price: £300,000-£350,000.

Getting in and out takes an age. Do not make the mistake of buckling in and then trying to shut the door — you will not be able to reach it as these harnesses are not inertia rest. You are stuck, strapped and trussed.

On the move it is as if all the doors and windows are open and the engine is in the cockpit with you. Road and engine noise is hideous, which is why intercom headphones with built-in microphones dangle from the roll-cage so that you and your passengers can talk.

For a thoroughbred racing car, the Escort is surprisingly easy to drive. The clutch is not as thigh-damaging as I had expected, acceleration is thrilling to the point of illegality, but ideal for passing meandering caravans on winding B roads. The four-pot caliper racing brakes on each wheel plus permanent four-wheel drive ensure the car goes where it is pointed and stops when it should.

Once in the Tesco car park however, the car's bad manners become apparent. With aerodynamic body skirts, sleeping policemen are potential bodywork des-

troyers and must be approached with extreme caution.

The turning circle is appalling, so parking is a nightmare, requiring seven- and eight-point turns to manoeuvre in the shopping throng. Sainz gets it round corners with handbrake turns, not recommended amid the trolleys.

Having collected the shopping, you open the rear hatch to find — the spare wheel. It is huge, with its own stand to support it. It is in bare metal, no soft carpeting here. The little space available is taken up by a fuel tank, a dangling net suspended from the roof to take odds and ends, the rollcage, and various high-tech-looking tubes and wires. This is not an environment for a dozen eggs and four bottles of wine.

Would the Escort do better elsewhere? We headed off to the nearest McDonald's drive-through for a large fries and a couple of cheeseburgers. Again, huge problems, first because like most rally cars, the Escort is left-hand drive. So, having thrashed and struggled to untangle myself from the har-

ness, I had to lever myself across the cramped cockpit to shout my order.

Howling sore-throated above the engine's racket, I made myself understood and drove round to collect my meal. As restaurant staff either gawped at the car or cringed away from the snarling exhaust, another lunge across the width of the car enabled me to collect the food. Nil points for convenience.

Where the rally car scores hugely is on the move. Visiting last weekend's Bexhill 100 motoring extravaganza, which happily was marking the 30th anniversary of the first Ford Cosworth grand prix win, the Cosworth-engined Escort drew crowds of admirers and big grins as it snarled and spat its way along the town's seafront. It has massive presence, outrageous street credibility, all underlined by being just about recognisably the car driven daily by millions.

There are drawbacks to such a profile and such a noise. The car is impossible to miss, and the heads of police throughout East Sussex swivelled inexorably to watch it pass. This is not a car in which to break the speed limit.

It is a car that plasters a grin from ear to ear over the face of the driver. Like the ultimate fairground thrill, it is supreme fun, even if the shopping was ruined.



Bexhill 100 Festival of Motoring



Freeman ponders the problems of finding room for the shopping in a boot full of spare wheel and fuel tank in an Escort that looks very different from the standard showroom model, top, but drew crowds of admirers on Bexhill seafront

A handsome coupé that gives glamour back to the French

Stuart Birch survives an encounter with goats in the desert to report that the V6 Peugeot 406 is no mirage

Several members of a large herd of Jordanian goats unknowingly owe a debt of gratitude to French car designers. Today, the goats are scratching for nourishment close to the very fast desert road running from the Dead Sea to Aqaba close to the Jordan-Saudi Arabian border. But the other day they were in the middle of that road — at the wrong moment.

As my V6 Peugeot 406 Coupé swept up a gentle slope, an amorphous, black, elongated shape appeared near the brow, shimmering like a mirage in the afternoon heat haze. Identification was difficult. The black shape started to move across the path of the rapidly moving Peugeot. Suddenly it was no longer ethereal; it comprised scores of black goats and a goat herder just the other side of the brow.

Brakes, steering, handling, roadholding and general capability of the Coupé were put to the test, as its speed was hauled down to zero with minimal drama. The goats wandered on, the goat herder waved his thanks. The Peugeot set off south again, dust and sand swirling in its

borrowed no body panels from it and the result is a car which stands out as a quality product.

The interior is also very attractive, although Peugeot drew the line at an all-new fascia, despite dials with chromed bezels, as the saloon origins are clear at once. That is a pity, but Peugeot was determined to ensure that the prior would make it highly competitive in a sector dominated by the BMW 3-series Coupé.

The reality of the Peugeot 406 Coupé is that it will be on sale at the end of this month and its handsome looks, performance potential and general competence are no mirage.

The car uses the platform of the 406 saloon and offers a choice of 1.35bhp 2-litre or 194bhp 3-litre engines. But

Pininfarina not only de-

signed the 406 Coupé but is also building it. Peugeot is very well aware of the need to ensure that quality is maintained. Each car undergoes a programme of inspections, static tests and a road test.

The 406 is satisfying to drive. The 2-litre is adequate but not particularly exciting despite having its gearing lowered to give added acceleration. The V6, though, is something else. Peugeot says diplomatically that it can reach more than 145mph "on a race track".

Peugeot has timed the 406's arrival very neatly as production ends of both the Ford Probe and Vauxhall Calibra.

However, 406 Coupés will hardly be flooding the market. Dick Parham, Peugeot's managing director reckons it sells about 2,800 a year and is confident the car will maintain a very high residual value.



Peugeot 406 Coupé: priced to be highly competitive in a sector dominated by BMW's 3-series

company stresses that it is not a sports car. It is billed as a full five-seater with comfortable, individually shaped rear seats. For those in the back, however, knee room is limited unless driver and front passengers give up a few inches.

Pininfarina not only designed the 406 Coupé but is also building it. Peugeot is very well aware of the need to ensure that quality is maintained. Each car undergoes a programme of inspections, static tests and a road test.

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Peugeot says it is aware of the need to introduce direct injection diesels to replace its indirect type. It plans to do so — with some advanced technology for maximum economy and to control noise levels.

Power steering is standard on the new 306 and air conditioning is available on several models. Peugeot has a turnover of more than £2 billion a year in the UK and Parham says productivity last year was 19 per cent up and warranty costs markedly down. Peugeot UK's French parent is investing at Ryton and next year will see production start there of the 205 replacement, the 206 Ti.

That car will major on

packaging, style and comfort with fine handling and dynamic qualities. Jordanian goats will be delighted.

406 COUPE

Engine: Four-cylinder 1998cc 135 bhp; V6 294cc.

Transmissions: Five-speed manual or four-speed auto.

Performance: 0-62mph in 10.4 secs, top speed 120 mph. 3-litre V6, 0-62mph in 7.9 secs, top speed 146mph.

Price: £20,120-£26,420.

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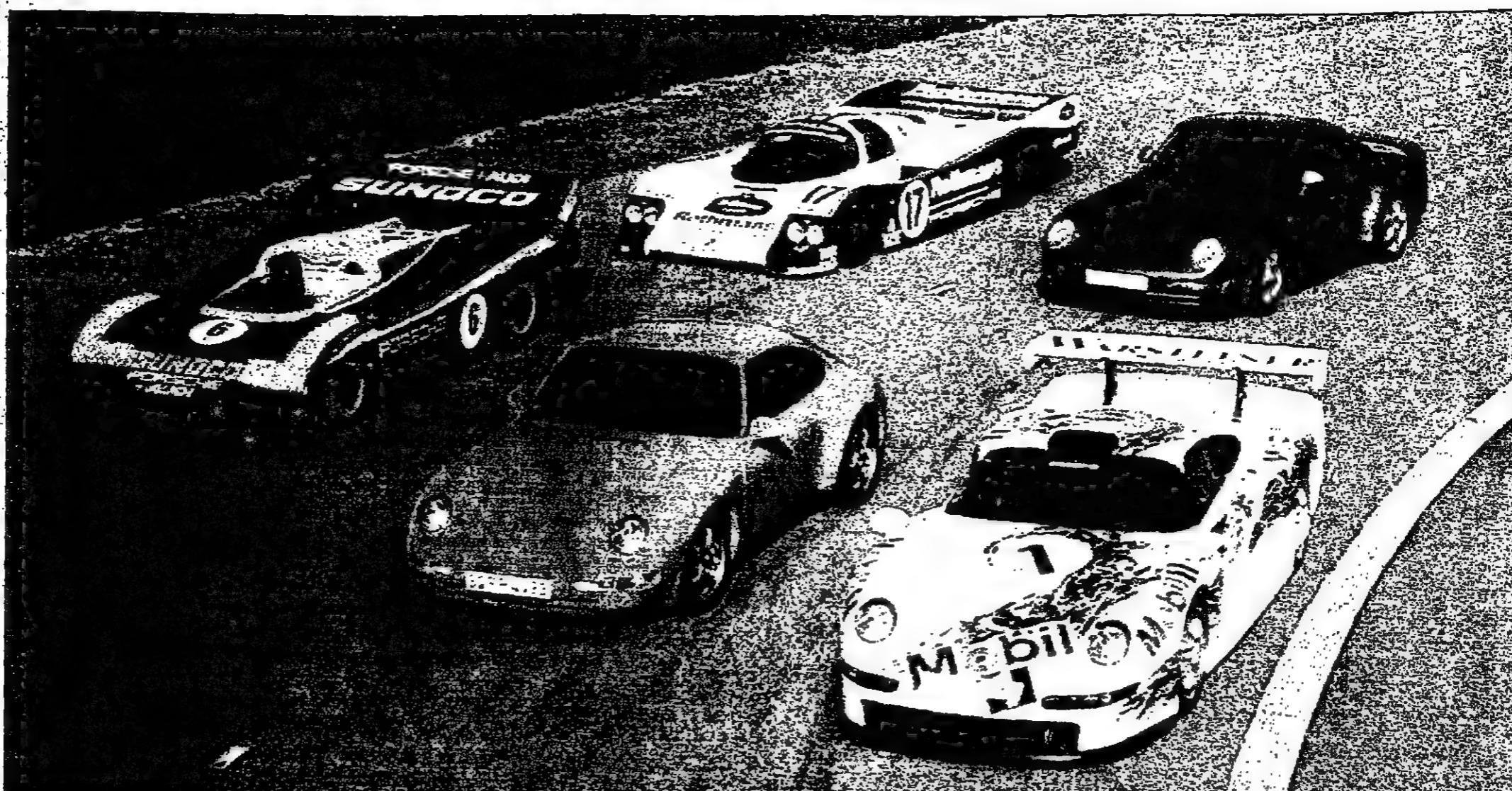
Alan Copps looks at Porsche legends displaying ultimate power at Goodwood's Festival of Speed — and you could be there



Win your place in the history of motorsport

IN JUST four years the Goodwood Festival of Speed has become one of the most important historic motorsport meetings in Europe. This year's event is dedicated to "Decades of Power" giving British fans a chance to see many machines in this country for the first time. A display to mark Ferrari's 50th anniversary is being sponsored by *The Times*. Tickets for the three days from June 20-22 are already in heavy demand, but CAR 97 is offering readers a chance to win two pairs of tickets valid for all three days, together with T-shirts, posters and programmes. All you have to do is answer the following question: Who were Jacky Ickx's co-drivers in his 1977 victory at the Le Mans 24-hour race?

Send your answer on a postcard to: Goodwood Contest, Car 97, *The Times*, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9ZN. Winners will be drawn from all correct entries. Usual rules apply. Closing date is May 20.



Clockwise from left, the 917/30, which dominated the 1973 CanAm series; the 962, Le Mans winner in 1987; the 959 supercar; the 911 GT1 which Hans Stuck will drive at Goodwood; the latest 911 Carrera road car

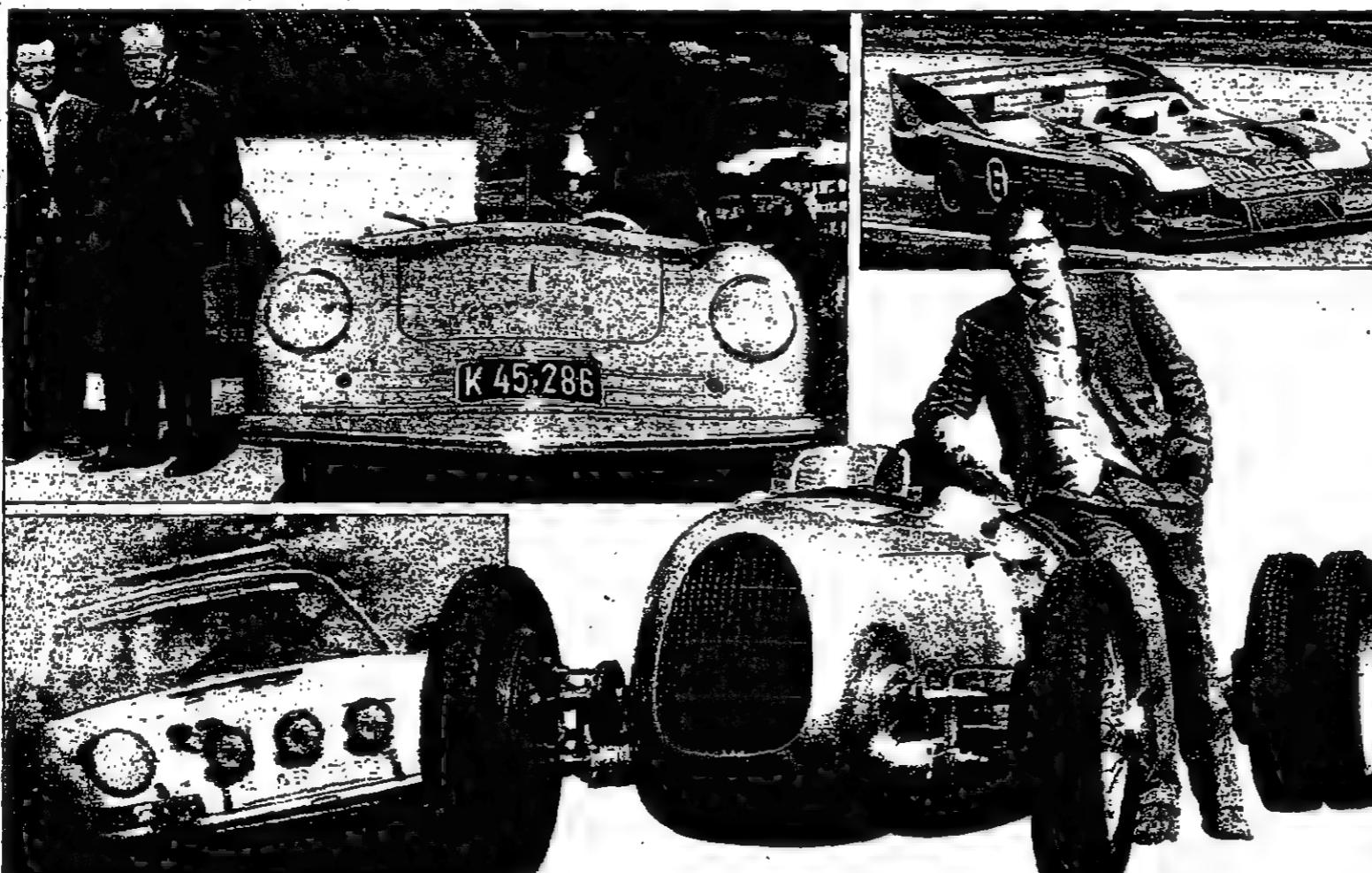
The V16 roars back after 60 years

Ferdinand Porsche has a lot to answer for in the world of motoring: in the first years of this century he designed an electric car, and in the 1920s was responsible for the powerful supercharged SSK, probably the most famous pre-war Mercedes-Benz tourer.

In the following decade it was his design, the striking mid-engined Auto Union, that challenged the might of Mercedes on the Grand Prix tracks of Europe in the great battles of the "Silver Arrows". At the same time he worked on Hitler's peoples' car that became the Volkswagen Beetle. But by then Dr Porsche had moved on to found the company that bears his name and that, under the direction of his son Ferry, dominated sports car and GT racing for so long and holds a record of 14 wins at the Le Mans 24-hour race.

So at an event like the Goodwood Festival of Speed, dedicated to "Decades of Power", it is not surprising that his name should be prominent. But rarely has it appeared in such a dramatic context as that of the Auto Union V16, certain to be one of the stars of the show and making its postwar competition debut and its first appearance in Britain for more than 60 years.

The below of this groundbreaking, mid-engined car's exhaust will reverberate across the Sussex Downs when Hans-Joachim Stuck, touring car champion, double Le Mans winner and ex-Formula One driver, takes the wheel of the only V16 known to have survived intact. It is the same type of car that his father, Hans Stuck, renowned as Europe's "mountain master", drove at the Shelsley Walsh hill climb in June 1936. In those days hill climbing was almost as important as track racing, the championship carried great prestige and some of the most innovative designs fought to win it. For such events the Auto Union ran with a six-wheeled layout to provide extra grip at the rear. There could be no more



Clockwise from top, Ferry and Ferdinand Porsche with a Type 356 in 1948; the 917/30; Lord March with the V16; the 911 SC Safari Rally car of 1978

appropriate car for a venue like Goodwood where the famous hill runs past Lord March's stately home.

This particular car scored its last victory at the Grossglockner hill climb just one month before the outbreak of war. Mercedes dispersed its Silver Arrows when war came, anxious to preserve their world-leading technology, and most were later recovered.

But when the Soviets took control of Lower Saxony in 1945 they found the Auto Union grand prix and mountain climb cars tucked away in the factories. They were promptly packed off to Moscow for technical examination

and then disappeared into the vastness of the former Soviet Union. Only a show chassis of a 1936 C-type grand prix car, made for display at a Munich museum and subsequently restored to working order by Audi, remained in the West. It will be on static display at Goodwood.

During the Cold War three V12 D-type cars were discovered and brought out of the Soviet bloc for restoration. But there was no trace of the V16s until the one that will run at Goodwood was found in a battered but virtually complete state in Latvia in the early 1970s and put on display in the Riga museum. It was

bought by Audi a few years ago and is just completing a restoration by the experts of Crosthwaite and Gardiner of Buxted in Sussex.

But if the V16 was the pinnacle of Dr Porsche's pre-war racing achievement there is no shortage of the cars that bear his name now and have scored so many dramatic successes since 1951. Between 1981 and 87, Porsche scored seven successive outright wins at Le Mans and in 1994 it not only won outright but won three other classes as well.

The most recent Porsche to be roaring up the Goodwood hill will be the 911 GT1 of 1996 which took second and third

places at Le Mans on its debut and went on to win every international GT race of the season. It will also be driven by Stuck. Another Le Mans winner making its debut in Britain is the 936 Spyder in which the Belgian driver Jacky Ickx, scored the most spectacular of his six Le Mans victories in 1977, taking over the car in 4th position and with co-drivers Jürgen Barth and Hurley Haywood carving through the field to take the chequered flag.

A Porsche will be one of the most powerful machines on display, the ground-shaking 1100bhp 917/30 which in the hands of Mark Donohue domi-

nated the CanAm race series of 1973, the North American contest for the biggest, fastest and most spectacular sports cars. It holds the record for the fastest lap on any closed circuit anywhere in the world, set at a speed of just over 220mph with Donohue driving at the Talladega Oval in Alabama in 1975.

To make sure that no one ignores the other part of the Porsche legend, the company's rallying triumphs will be represented by the 911 SC Safari Rally car of 1978 which will be driven by double world rally champion Walter Rohrl.

Advance booking hotline: 01243-787260.

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Porsche Cars Great Britain Limited is offering readers of *The Times* the exclusive opportunity to win a VIP trip for two people to the 1997 Le Mans 24hr race.

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The draw will take place on May 31st and the winner notified by telephone on June 3rd 1997. No alternative or cash can be taken instead. Porsche assume that by entering the draw, respondents are able to attend on the 13th June. Travel to London and return to Paris are not included in the prize.

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McLaren bids to endure again

Morag Preston looks at Silverstone's British Empire Trophy race meeting

Less than a month before Le Mans, more than 50 top-notch cars will battle it out at Silverstone tomorrow for the second round of the 1997 FIA GT Championship.

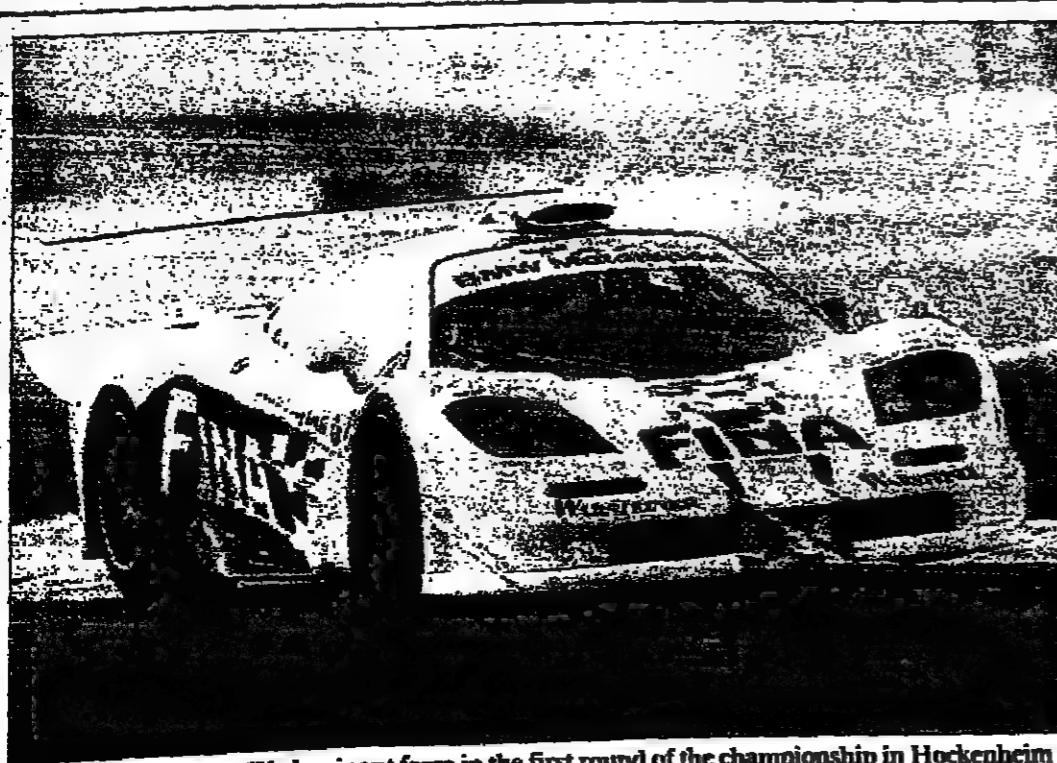
Five manufacturers, including last year's Empire Race winners McLaren, will be vying for victory at the 3.194-mile grand prix circuit in Northamptonshire on the third day of the British Empire Trophy race meeting. In the line-up for the four-hour endurance race will be some of the top cars competing in the 24-hour French classic.

The new FIA GT worldwide championship has grown out of the BPR Global Endurance series, set up in 1994 by three wealthy businessmen with a passion for racing sports cars based on road cars—Jürgen Barth, Patrick Peter and Stephan Ratel. Then the big car manufacturers caught wind of the new wave in sports car racing,

heim. Bernd Schneider and Alex Wurz will be behind the wheel of the leading Mercedes CLK GTR. Meanwhile, Jan Lammers and Fabian Giroix will be racing for Lotus, whose neat, lightweight cars have all suffered teething problems as predicted.

Noel Edmunds will also be at the track to watch Panoz, his own race team, compete. His eyes will be fixed on the futuristic-looking V8-powered car from Irish-American Don Panoz driven by Britain's James Weaver, joint reigning GT Endurance champion with Ray Bellm, and 1996 Empire Trophy winner Andy Wallace.

Two key support races will also take place tomorrow. The stars of the future will take to the track a British Formula 3 championship, while the potential grand prix stars of 1998 line up for the opening round of the 1997 Formula 3000 International series.



McLaren Team BMW, dominant force in the first round of the championship in Hockenheim

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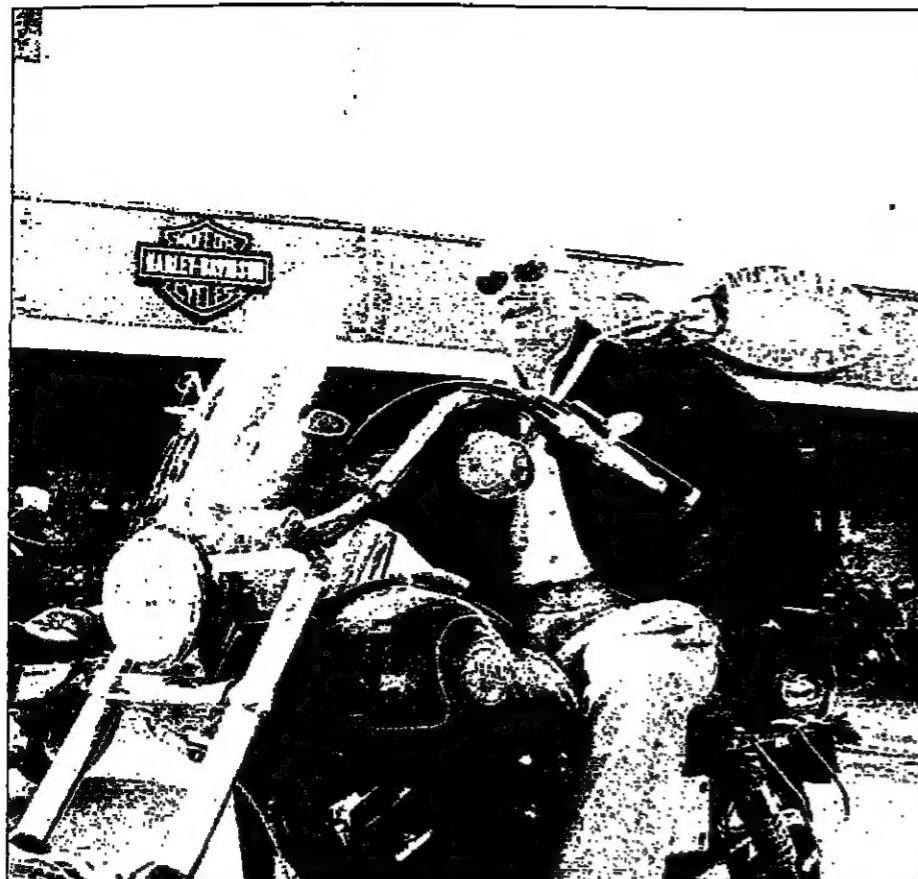
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It's a long way off Route 66, but Southampton is where Harley Davidson owners get their kicks, says Kate Laven



John Potter, whose children told him to transform his image if he was to run Dockgate 20 Motorcycles, where the showroom is filled with the roar of Milwaukee iron thunder and satisfies every whim and urge of a Harley Davidson owner



Dockgate 20, paradise for HOGs

John Potter's teenage children were the first to suggest that he should transform his image if he was to be the owner of the largest Harley Davidson dealership in Europe.

Even if the Southampton location wasn't exactly as hip as West Coast America, he still needed to demonstrate an understanding of the icon and its following, his kids told him.

Presiding over the recent opening of the dealership, the Kent businessman, who has ploughed £1.5 million into the new project, looked like any other punter, yet one quick look over his "shop" and there is no doubt that Potter, bantana or no bandana, is utterly in tune with his market.

Dockgate 20 Motorcycles could well have been named to evoke images of a Californian quayside — shotgun exhaust, chrome headlight and Peter Fonda lookalike against a moody sunset background.

Instead it was named to take advantage of all the signs that start appearing from some

distance out of the city directing truckers to the Dockgate 20 container terminal. It's optimum use of available resources, says Potter, who describes himself as businessman first, passionate biker second.

Together with his managing director, the former Australian motorcycling champion Paul Lewis, he kitted out the specially-converted premises to take maximum advantage of the universal adoration for Harley Davidson machines and the lifestyle that ownership affords.

As a result, he has created not merely a bike shop but a unique cult centre satisfying every whim and urge a Harley owner might experience in the space of a lifetime.

What Harley owners love to do best when they are not actually riding the legendary bike is talk about riding it with other bikers. They love to feel part of the Harley family.

The rows of leather jackets, watches, sunglasses and

boots, the branded babygros for mini-HOGs and other paraphernalia is a spectacular exhibit in itself.

It appeared untouchable, although the 3,000 people who turned up for the launch found it highly touchable and handed over huge wads of notes for the privilege of bearing the famous name somewhere about their body, as Potter and Lewis suspected they might.

Add to all this an insulated booth where bikers can go and have their noise and power output measured and documented — for bragging purposes in the diner — the image-enhancing music and the grins that appear on people's faces when the roar of Milwaukee iron thunder fills the showroom and you have a one-stop indulgence shop.

Since posing is a big part of Harley ownership, a third of the 11,000 sq ft showroom is devoted to merchandise, mostly in the ubiquitous black and chrome.

The appeal of the Harley Davidson in Southampton might come as a surprise to those who see the city purely as an unfashionable also-ran

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in the Premier League. But, according to customers and management, there is much about the place which makes it the perfect South Coast location.

Forget Route 66 and Malibu beach. Consider instead the M27 and Bournemouth pier.

It is surrounded by motorways, which are ideal terrain for Harleys, and there are lots of good beaches in the region where one can go and pose,

says Sue Robinson, a Southampton general practitioner, one of the first of a dozen customers to place an order

before Dockgate 20 had opened its door to the public.

To Potter and Lewis, the reasons for choosing Southampton were less esoteric.

"We did a lot of research and found that Southampton had a strong HOG chapter in the New Forest and ranked quite high as far as disposable income was concerned and both of these were important."

Potter had owned a Harley Davidson for two years before the idea for a dealership struck: "I thought it might be really enjoyable to be part of this whole environment and atmosphere," he explains, eyes flashing.

Ironically, his competition for a South Coast franchise turned out to be Lewis, who ran a flourishing motorcycle accessories shop in Southampton but instead of pitching them against each other, the team at Harley Davidson UK spotted their potential as a partnership and gently nurtured it.

Lewis had vision and years

of experience in competitive motorcycling but no immediate access to funds. Potter on the other hand had money but was short on experience of the retail motorcycle industry, though he had run his own successful mouldings company.

Inevitably there have been some arguments along the way, but the partnership has become more dynamic as it has matured.

"It wasn't until we saw this building that we started to really talk about how we wanted the place to look and feel though we both knew we did not want a boutique. We sat down and addressed every aspect of the business from the people perspective, both staff-wise and customer."

The property developer who sold them the building was like a lot of their suppliers and advisers, a Harley owner. Some of those who did not previously own a Harley have now become customers. All the staff are committed devotees of the marque.

The initial success of Dockgate 20 lies in the recognition that this sort of passion can be embraced, harnessed and put to effective commercial use without any accompanying cynicism to spoil the fun. It leaves you wondering what Potter and Lewis would do if they had a caravan dealership.



Paul Lewis: "I thought it might be really enjoyable to be part of this whole environment"

A TIMES NEWSPAPERS COMPETITION

Play Fantasy Formula One

Prizes worth £40,000



There are 600 extra points to be picked up with tomorrow's Monaco Grand Prix, the second of six races offering bonus points in our competition. Below we feature the fantasy scores after the San Marino Grand Prix and our leaderboard which shows B Tama of Chelmsford, Essex, leading the race for our £25,000 grand prize with his team, Tama, on 3,242 points.

TO ENTER If you have not yet entered a team into our £40,000 competition use the panel, below right, to make three selections from each of the four groups and call 0891 405 001 (-44 990 100 311 outside the UK).

THE PRIZES The manager with the best team score after the Portuguese Grand Prix on October 26, will win the first prize of £25,000 courtesy of our sponsor Marlboro World Championship



team. Prizes of £10,000 and £5,000 will go to the runners-up. The manager with the most points in the Monaco Grand Prix will win a trip for two to the British Grand Prix on July 13. The runner-up will get a Sony PlayStation and Formula One game worth £250.

TRANSFERS You can change up to four selections before the Spanish Grand Prix by calling 0891 555 994 (-44 990 100 394 ex UK) before noon Thursday, May 22. Your new team must have three selections from each of groups A, B, C and D. The first three drivers you select will be your prediction for the British GP bonus points.

CHECK YOUR SCORE Check your score and position after the Monaco Grand Prix on 0891 584 648 (-44 990 100 394 ex UK) with your 10-digit PIN number. Lines will open on Wednesday.

OUR LEADERBOARD AFTER THE SAN MARINO GRAND PRIX

POS	TEAM NAME	MANAGER NAME	POINTS
1	Tama	B Tama	3224
2	Tetch-Meisters Racing	B J Day	3131
3	Farside Racing	R M Hurt	3097
4	Dragon Racing	R Davis	3060
5	Salt Arrows	S O Okufuwa	3046
6	Parkhurst Racing	L Darson	3036
7	No Team Name	J Le Mont	3034
8	Bleak Outlook	D Hilditch	3031
9	Blitz 'Em All	N Timar	3018
10	Kernow	M Turf	3017
11	It's No Ads Pls	K G Hunter	3017
12	No Team Name	No Name	3017
13	Bar Elton	S Nicholls	3017
14	Midnight Runners	D Deacon	3017
15	Go West	G Milne	3017
16	Cherokes	L Lenahan	3007
17	No Team Name	No Name	3007
18	Gary's Wacky Racers	G R Taylor	3007
19	Eric's Mob	E Winterbottom	3007
20	Team Libra	R J Rumble	3007
21	Markat	D T Haworth	3007
22	Delta Integrale	B Rashidian	3007
23	Rand Runners	M Rand	3007
24	Over The Hill?	C J Rice	3005
25	Deals & Bugs Racing	R H Brooks	3004

MAKE 3 SELECTIONS FROM EACH OF THESE FOUR GROUPS

The first column of figures in light type after the names show the Fantasy Formula One San Marino GP race scores, the second column the total competition points so far
01 D Hill 3 130 07 M Hakkinen 114 514
02 M Schumacher 139 413 08 D Coulthard 45 318
03 J Villeneuve 80 414 09 R Barrichello 38 149
04 E Irvine 138 408 10 H-F Frentzen 160 402
05 J Alesi 130 421 11 J Herbert 28 302
06 G Berger 10 425 12 M Sato 123 421
07 O Panis 110 399 19 G Fisichella 119 286
08 J Verstappen 117 260 20 S Nakajima 10 283
09 U Katayama 115 268 21 N Larini 118 431
10 P Diniz 53 223 22 J Trulli -3 361
11 R Rosset 0 0 23 J Magnussen 3 161
12 R Schumacher 29 236 24 V Sospiri 0 0

0891 calls cost 50p per minute (standard tariffs apply to +44 992 calls).

CHANGING TIMES

Launching its vision for the future, the RAC has gone back to when mini skirts and the Beatles were more likely to be on the lips than congestion, air pollution and global warming.

The club has developed a new image, backed up by high profile advertisements for the 21st century to reflect modern environmental concerns.

Part of this vision includes its RAC All Purpose Bicycle, a folding machine designed to pop in the boot or be carried on the train. It may appear a futuristic machine and a key weapon in the war to reduce pollution on the car for rather than disappear into, potholes. In the classic Moulton way, the new bicycle splits into two parts for storage using an allen key housed under the seat.

However, the look is decidedly contemporary and owes much to the popular mountain bike. It has a Stormey Archer 1-speed hub gear system which simply twists on the handlebars.

While the rest of the world may remain wedded to big wheeled bikes, Sir Alex believes his designs remain superior. On a recent visit to the engineer's house in the heart of the Gloucestershire countryside, he was keen to stress the virtues of small wheeled bikes.

"Look at the Lotus bike which did so well in the Olympics. Chris Boardman may have achieved 35-36mph an hour on it at the Olympics, but the world record for a fully streamlined bicycle in a conventional position is held by us at Simp," he said.

The record of 51.29mph was achieved by Jim Clover in Vancouver, Canada, on August 29, 1986.

Smaller wheels can improve acceleration speed and roadholding and allow the rider to maintain a tight



The RAC All Purpose Bicycle: reflecting modern environmental concerns

position behind a competitor on a large-wheeled machine, claims Sir Alex.

"That's Tommy Simpson, the greatest cyclist of that period, on a Moulton Speed," he said, poring over photographs of celebrities riding his cycles during the Sixties. "He said that if he had not been racing for Peugeot, he would have chosen to ride a Moulton. That was before the regulations [prohibiting wheels smaller than 27-inches in diameter] came in."

The various guises of the original Moulton sported 16in or 17in wheels whose tyres were not widely available. But the popularity of BMX bicycles means that 20in tyres are easy to find.

Riding the new machine is certainly fun but also a compromise. Little wheels allow much faster acceleration from traffic lights but can become a touch tiresome when pedalling over large distances.

which, on a bigger bike at high speed, can be covered more quickly...

The suspension, while smooth, also seems to consume some of the cyclist's energy which might be better directed at propulsion.

Nevertheless, in cities it offers an eye-catching icon as you sail past car and lorry drivers bumper-to-bumper, swearing curses.

The RAC All Purpose Bicycle costs £649, which may seem pricey but compares well with other hand-made machines.

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